NAVAL WARFARE.

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NAVAL WARFARE

ITS RULING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE HISTORICALLY TREATED

BY

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PREFACE.

In writing this book I have kept in mind the double object of showing that there are laws governing the conduct of naval war which cannot be transgressed with impunity; and that there is no reason to believe them abrogated by any of the changes of recent years.

I was induced to undertake it from observing, with some surprise, a wide-spread conception that either there never had been any laws governing naval war, or that if there had been such in the days of sailing ships, they had been entirely swept away and destroyed by the advent of steam, steel ships, armour, breech-loading rifled guns, and torpedoes. This belief appeared to me the more singular, as no one ventured to suggest that railways, the electric telegraph, breech-loading rifled ordnance, and small arms, had altered the well-established rules of war upon the land. But in considering the existence of such antithetical ideas side by side, it appeared to me that the cause might not improbably be found in the differences of method pursued by writers of naval and of military history. There did not exist, I believed, in any language a book written with the object of discriminating between the possible and impossible, the prudent and the imprudent, the wise and the foolish, in the conduct of naval war. But books describing war upon land with these objects in view were abundant in all languages, and I had been much struck with a more recent and powerful contribution to such literature—Sir Edward Hamley's *Operations of War*. Yet even the title chosen for this work seemed

to confirm my view, in apparently inferring the opinion that war upon the land was, if not the only war of consequence to the world, at least the only war which would bear systematic analysis and treatment.

I had long been aware that ordinary naval histories, especially works in English near our own time, were, as histories, quite the most unsatisfactory productions existing. They all ran in two grooves; the one contenting itself in a mere chronological narrative of events having no other connections but those of time and place; the other being written for the glorification or condemnation of individuals whose characters were judged from isolated and disconnected acts. Perhaps no stronger illustration of my meaning can be drawn than by mentioning that while James is the recognized historian of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Naval Wars, he did not think it necessary to furnish his volumes with more than a personal index.

Historians then had generally neglected to give any attention to the causes of success or failure in naval war; they did not connect the facts or events which were necessary for that purpose. Naval commanders, on the other hand, seem to have been so entirely convinced of the force of causes beyond their control, and so satisfied of their obviousness, that they seldom alluded to them. Of writers on naval strategy there were absolutely none; writers on naval tactics were few and far between; they generally wrote as if the study of the tactics of manœuvring embraced the whole subject; and the elaborate simplicity of Clerk of Eldin got an extensive hearing, because he stood almost alone as a writer in applying to the naval battle, considerations which no writer could omit in treating of the battle on land.

I held this condition of the literature of naval war to be mainly responsible for the want of its study, which was common; and thus for the existing belief that nothing was to be got from it either in lessons for the present, or guidance for the future.

It was the conviction that no state of mind could well be more dangerous for this Empire, that led me think I might usefully employ my very moderate powers in writing a study of some of

the larger phases of naval war, from the strategical and tactical point of view. The book I hope may be a pioneer. It is no more than the study for what in abler hands might become a great picture. I have not pretended to re-write the histories I have used. My original research has been but small—indeed, the scope of the work did not admit of it. But I have trusted to create an interest by not only giving the narratives as I find them, but by endeavouring always to extract the reasons for each event, and to bring out the causes which here conduced to success, and there determined failure.

I have a firm belief that the great laws of naval war which I have endeavoured to trace throughout the centuries in which England has been building up her power, would be absolutely dominant in any naval war which now arose; and that they may be depended on for forecasting its course and preparing for it. Not that I assume to have, in all cases, arrived at just conclusions, but rather that there are in the history and experience of the past ample materials for forming them and acting on them.

It will be observed that here and there in the book I have given evidence of an intention to extend my inquiry into what might be called the secondary operations of naval war. I have in this volume treated of "The Nature of Naval War"; "The Struggle for the Command of Sea" as a preliminary object, whether pursued as an end in itself, or in view of some further operations; "The Differentiation of Naval Force," or the laws which divide ships into classes and govern their dimensions; and the laws which govern the success or failure of "Attacks on Territory from the Sea." These are the main divisions into which experience has led naval war. But within these greater divisions are the smaller ones which embrace the practice of blockade; the attack and defence of commerce; and the whole field of tactics in the open sea. I had intended that this volume should contain brief notices of these things. But I found it was necessary to extend the chapters on territorial attack to a much greater length than I had originally prepared for, in order to combat the strongest prepossessions of the public mind to-day. And then I found it

impossible to present an intelligible picture of the three lesser divisions in any space which would not unduly swell the present volume. Whether I deal with these portions of the subject hereafter, will very much depend upon the success of my first effort.

I have scarcely ever in these pages applied the laws I treat of to the conditions of to-day. I consider that to be a separate subject; and that it is enough, in the first instance, to show that application is possible.

While this work was in process of appearing in the pages of the *Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine*, I was delighted to see by the publication of Captain Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power*, that on the other side of the Atlantic an abler pen, and a deeper thinker, had been at work on thoughts something like my own. In a sense, the two books form the complements of each other; for while the American author dwells chiefly upon the influences which have followed the exertion of sea-power, I have devoted myself more to showing what sea-power is, and how it acts.

An author is probably more conscious than any reader can be of his demerits, his lapses, and his errors. In offering my book to the public, I can only trust that it will remember that the use of an entirely new tool is not mastered in the first effort; and that in my treatment of naval history I had no model to go by.

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ERRATA.

Page 40, last line: *for* "English," *read* "Dutch."
.. 41, first two lines: *for* "Dutch," *read* "English"; and *for* "English." *read* "Dutch."
.. 59, line 2: *for* "700," *read* "70."
,. 67, line 20: *for* "Sussex," *read* "Suffolk."
.. 82, note: *for* "vol. ii., p. 968," *read* "p. 6."
,, 115, line 28: *for* "matters," *read* "masters."
,, 122, line 3: *for* "Tynemouth." *read* "Teignmouth."
.. 187, note: *for* "Port Royal," *read* "Fort Royal."

NAVAL WARFARE.

CHAPTER I.

The Nature of Naval War.

True naval war cannot be carried on until commerce bears a large proportion to the riches of a country, and till ships are able to keep the sea.—It could not, consequently, have existed before the time of Elizabeth.—But it was only as the Spanish war grew that the true principles were perceived, and a want of perception on the part of Spain was one of the causes of her failure.—At and after the close of the war, the true principles were, to a great extent, understood by Sir William Monson and Sir Walter Raleigh, as may not only be drawn from the language they used, but from the practice they recommended, and, in some cases, put in force.—The primary aim of naval war is the command of the sea.—Any other aim is an acceptance of the position of the inferior naval power, and the abnegation of all hopes of ultimate success.

Unlike its military congener, of which the principles descend from times immemorial, naval warfare is of comparative modern origin. Sea fights there were, no doubt, in very ancient times, but sea fights do not of themselves constitute naval warfare. With possible exceptions here and there, in early Grecian or perhaps Roman days, the ancient sea-fights were the result of military expeditions by sea and not of naval considerations.

The operations of military warfare have at all times been conducted with a view to territorial conquest; the field of battle was struggled for by the combatants as a possession to be either temporarily held as a basis for further operations, or as part of the territory which was to be permanently occupied. The sea-fight of ancient times was but the contention of armies on the water, not to hold the field of battle and surrounding waters, but simply as the encounter of one army with another which was barring its way to the conquest of territory. Permanent occupation of the water, as of the land, was a thing undreamt of, because impossible

to the trireme of the ancients, or to the galley of the Middle Ages. Nothing that was then built was what we now call a sea-going or a sea-keeping ship, and there was, in fact, nothing to call for such structures. It was not till the frequented water areas became greatly extended, and till the oar ceased to be a propulsive power in the ordinary ship, that it was possible to build her so that she should remain in permanent occupation of the sea.

And yet, if we look back to what may be called the early days of naval warfare under sail, we shall observe that there was little or no contention for occupation of, or command over, the sea, such as was exercised and claimed over territory on land. Neither riches, nor renown, nor any other advantages could be gathered directly from the sea. Commerce was absolutely small, but relatively to the power of nations possessing sea coasts, even smaller. The advantage of the sea was its convenience as a medium of transport, and it seemed one common to two neighbouring nations at war. Coasts were open, and the small attacks capable of being organized were sudden, and could not well be prepared against. The great value of the sea was the easy means it presented for getting at the enemy's territory and ravaging it.

England had for a long course of years put in a claim for what she called "the sovereignty of the seas" surrounding her. But this was chiefly a civil claim, not a military one. It was as nearly as possible a claim to extend what are now our admitted rights in our territorial waters—a belt three miles wide from the shore—over very large water areas indeed.* The whole claim being solemnly denied by the Dutch, and the denial formulated by the learned writer Grotius, Charles I. employed Selden to write a counterblast, reasserting the claim, and for the first time fitted out a fleet to enforce it.

But the claim had to do with rights of fishery, rights of traffic, anchorages, and so on. It was apart from any ideas of water command for military purposes, even so late as Charles' days. At an earlier time the sea was regarded as a common highway for military expeditions, there being but little attempt to secure it for the use of one side only.

Out of this view of the sea grew what I have ventured to christen

* The British seas, or the Four Seas, as they were indifferently termed, over which this sovereignty was claimed, began at the point where the 63rd parallel touches the coast of Norway. Then the boundary ran down all the coasts to Cape Finisterre; in that latitude to the meridian of 23° W. Then along this meridian, to the 63rd parallel and to Norway again. See *Burchett's Naval History*, p. 34.

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To face Page 7

"cross-ravaging," a system of retaliatory expeditions attacking territory, destroying towns, burning property, and laying waste with fire and sword. This is a system to which we are early introduced, but which is not confined to very early dates. It is a system out of which not much advantage to either side has ever come; but down to the latest periods we can find it where there is no distinct aim of purely naval warfare, that is to say, no distinct aim on either side to assert and maintain a control over the water, such as in military warfare is asserted and maintained over the land.

Thus, in 1512, Sir Edward Howard crossed to Brest with a fleet from which forces landed and burnt Conquet. A reinforcement being sent out, the new fleet met and defeated the French fleet just as it came out of port. That operation finished a year's campaign; but next spring Howard again proceeded to Brest, and the French, pending the arrival of some galleys from the Mediterranean, remained in port, and permitted Howard to sail up the harbour, to burn and ravage the country opposite to Brest, but without attempting anything against the town itself, or the fleet there. The galleys then arrived at Conquet, where Howard, coming out of Brest, attacked them, but unfortunately lost his life in the encounter. Our fleet then returned home. But the French in their turn fitted out a fleet, ravaged the coast of Sussex and burnt Brighton. Sir Thomas Howard, brother of Sir Edward, fitted out another fleet before which the French retired, and he in his turn took an army over to Calais, and captured Terouenne and Tournay.

In 1522, the Emperor Charles V. joined Henry VIII. in an expedition to Cherbourg, which place, falling into the hands of the allies, became the base of operations for ravaging and destroying all the adjacent country. This done, the expedition returned to Portland. Sailing thence again, Howard took Morlaix by storm.

Next summer (1523), however, we meet a condition of things more closely suggesting the form which naval war was ultimately to take, for Sir William Fitz-William passed over to the coast of France with a fleet of thirty-six sail, for the purpose of intercepting a French fleet which was understood to be escorting the Duke of Albany back to his Regency in Scotland. He met and drove back this escort to Dieppe and Boulogne, and then Fitz-William, having thus gained the naval control of the surrounding waters, left a portion of his fleet to watch and mask the French in their

ports, while he himself proceeded to ravage and destroy the coast as far as Tréport, where he burnt the suburbs, and all the ships in the harbour.

There were in our history no more expeditions by sea till 1544, when war broke out with Scotland, and then with France. King Henry landed an army at Calais, and marched to Boulogne, which fell into his hands after an investment by sea and land.

The French, in their turn, fitted out a fleet and made for St. Helens, where, after a partial action, rendered memorable only by the loss of the *Mary Rose* which preceded it, they landed and attempted to hold the Isle of Wight. Failing in this, they landed in Sussex, where they were repulsed with loss. Retiring to their own coasts, the French landed part of their army near Boulogne, presumably with the design of recovering it. But a change of wind either compelling it, or facilitating it, the French crossed again over to the English coast, where they were met and defeated by the English fleet. As a reply to this last attempt of the French, the English passed over to their coast and again burnt Tréport and thirty ships which were found in the harbour.*

In 1547, the French made an attack on Guernsey and Jersey, but ships and troops being sent from England, the attack was abandoned after the enemy had suffered considerable loss.

Calais fell to the French early in Mary's reign (1558), and not impossibly altered the general view of naval war by removing our last permanent foothold on the soil of France.

But our immediate reprisal was a projected attack on Brest, which, however, dwindled down ultimately to the re-burning of Conquet, and the ravaging of the adjacent coasts in the usual manner.

The whole system, it is readily seen, was one of military reprisals, always more or less open to interruption by the naval forces of the power attacked. There is hardly any idea present on either side of getting such a control of the sea as would prevent the other side from undertaking these ravaging expeditions. The reply to landing and ravaging on one side is generally the attempt at cross-ravaging on the other. The sea is a convenient medium for the transport of armies, and the sea-fight proper only comes in incidentally, as when the French fleet issues from Brest to meet a force proposing to land in the vicinity, or as when Henry VIII.

* It is not necessary to quote authorities specifically for these early illustrations, as to which Burchett (1720), Lediard (1735), Berkley (1756), and Entick (1757) are all pretty well agreed. Lediard and Entick quote the original authorities, Burchett and Berkley do not. I have also consulted MM. Troude and Levot on the French side.

collects his ships at Spithead to interrupt the French in their proposed capture of the Isle of Wight. Naval war this is not, and neither to facilitate the attack, nor to strengthen the defence, is direct possession of the sea sought.

Two things were wanting to alter this condition of military war carried on by water. On the sea itself was not to be found property of the enemy sufficient to make it an object of attack. Although sea-borne commerce was growing, it was not yet of a character or extent sufficiently important on any side to render its suppression a serious injury to the nation carrying it on. An hour or two's burning of a coast town probably offered greater prizes to the descending foe, and wrought greater distress in the nation attacked, than weeks or months of preying on the small and occasional cargoes which were to be found actually at sea.

The other want was ships capable of keeping the sea. If the sea was to be controlled, it was absolutely necessary that the ships assuming to control should be able to maintain their position at sea continuously. So long as it was necessary to return to port after a very short stay at sea; so long as ships were so mastered by the weather as to be continually driven back by it, with endeavours or intentions frustrated; it was always open to the enemy to reassume, if only for a time, that control of the sea which had been challenged. This condition was not reached by mere change of season. Winter voyages or cruises were forbidden to both sides for centuries, for neither had ships competent to face the dangers of winter weather. War by sea ceased in winter, just as it did upon land, and therefore neither side could gain an advantage until the summer came round again. But the summer gale which drove a fleet before it into the shelter of safe havens, might not be felt in the enemy's locality, or might help him over to his enemy's coast. If one fleet ran short of water, of provisions, or of munitions; or if its crews became sickly and demanded the recruitment of a stay in the quiet of harbour, it by no means followed that the other hostile fleet would be in the same condition at the same time. If they were in condition to put to sea when the first fleet was obliged to return to port, they were entirely free to use the water as the medium of transport, and to carry out their ravaging expeditions by its means. Miscalculations might occur; the fleet which had been compelled to retire into port, might be again ready for sea sooner than was anticipated, and there might be a sea-fight in consequence. But had the fleet which first retired into port been able to maintain its place at

sea, or had it been at least understood to be ready to act at sea, the ravaging expedition could not have been carried out until the sea-keeping fleet had been in some way disposed of, or forced to withdraw.

The supply of both these necessary ingredients of naval war was gradual, and as a consequence the change from the practice of cross-ravaging over a theoretically free sea to systematic naval war with rules deduced from experience, and settled axioms which had become instinctive from continued and forced acceptance, was gradual too.

So far as this country is concerned, the sea-borne commerce question, either as one of defence or attack, did not come into material notice until the time of Elizabeth. But quite early in her reign, we begin to hear of the making of prizes in the Channel. Then we hear of French and Dutch privateers contemporaneous with, and perhaps, in cases, anticipating, the commencement of our partly legitimate and partly piratical war upon the rich commerce of Spain.

Thus Burchett* says, speaking of the years 1560–62, and of the Queen's efforts to increase and improve the naval force:

> In imitation of this laudable example of the Queen's, many of her wealthy subjects, who lived near the sea coasts, set themselves to building of ships, so that in a short time those of the Crown and of private persons were become so numerous as, on occasion of any naval war, might employ 20,000 men. The good effects of these preparations were shortly after seen in the war the Queen undertook in behalf of the Protestants of France, wherein, besides the land forces she sent over to Normandy to their assistance, her ships, scouring the seas, sorely distressed their enemies by taking great numbers of prizes from them, and at length totally interrupting their trade.

Lediard,† quoting earlier authorities, says that when in 1561 Elizabeth fitted a fleet out to intercept Mary Queen of Scots on her return from France, she gave out that it was intended to clear the sea of pirates; which indicates that a sea harvest was already beginning to be reaped.

Entick particularizes more closely, and says—quoting several authorities—that as the French Court commissioned privateers

> to prey upon our ships, Elizabeth was obliged to follow their example, and by proclamation she gave leave to her subjects to make reprisals; which was attended with such success, that one Clarke, with three frigates only, for his share carried into Newhaven, within a cruise of six weeks, eighteen prizes, valued at £50,000 sterling."‡

* Burchett, p. 343.
† Lediard, vol. i. p. 138.
‡ Entick, p. 208.

From about this time, the attack and defence of commerce begins to take form and position as a regular element of naval war. The trade of England was pushing out in various quarters, under the auspices of the Company of Merchant Adventurers. Jenkinson opened it up with Russia and Persia; John Hawkins, using the trade in slaves as his instrument, drew the West Coast of Africa and the Western Indies together. The Portuguese and the Dutch were actively pursuing trade in the East Indies and in South America. Spain had a practical monopoly of commerce with the West Indies and the Pacific, which she was neither strong enough nor intelligent enough to hold.

An early indication of the advent of a regular system of naval war is offered by the attacks of Danish freebooters on our Russian commerce. In 1570 the Danes were worsted, and five of their ships captured by the squadron of thirteen of the Merchant Adventurers' ships in the Baltic. A formal report of the action was made to the Emperor of Russia by Christopher Hodsdon and William Burrough, who commanded the English ships.* About 1573 the French Protestants, having taken to the sea as privateers or pirates, for the purpose of injuring their Catholic countrymen, extended their now lucrative operations so as even to include the ships of their English friends. And later, again, the Dutch, privateering ostensibly against the ships of their Spanish enemies, were in the same way tempted out of the legitimate line of their proceedings by the richness of possible English prizes. Under the pretext—which was very likely no pretext, but a truth, in some cases—that our ships brought supplies and succour to the Spaniards by way of Dunkirk, they fell upon our commerce to its serious detriment. Sir Thos. Holstock, who was then Comptroller of the Navy, was employed to suppress this loose piracy, and succeeded in both cases.†

But, perhaps, the real opening of the new phase, the source, as it were, from which the river of naval war was ever after to flow, was the treacherous attack by the Spaniards on Hawkins at St. Juan de Ulloa in 1567. All the world seems to have thereafter become alive to two things—the enormous value of sea-borne commerce to the countries which carried it on, and the tremendous risks attending its prosecution in war on the one hand, as well as the great advantages arising from its attack on the other.

As the growth of commerce can be inferred from the continued

* Lediard, vol. i., p. 152; Berkley, p. 307.

† Burchett, p. 344; Berkley, p. 312.

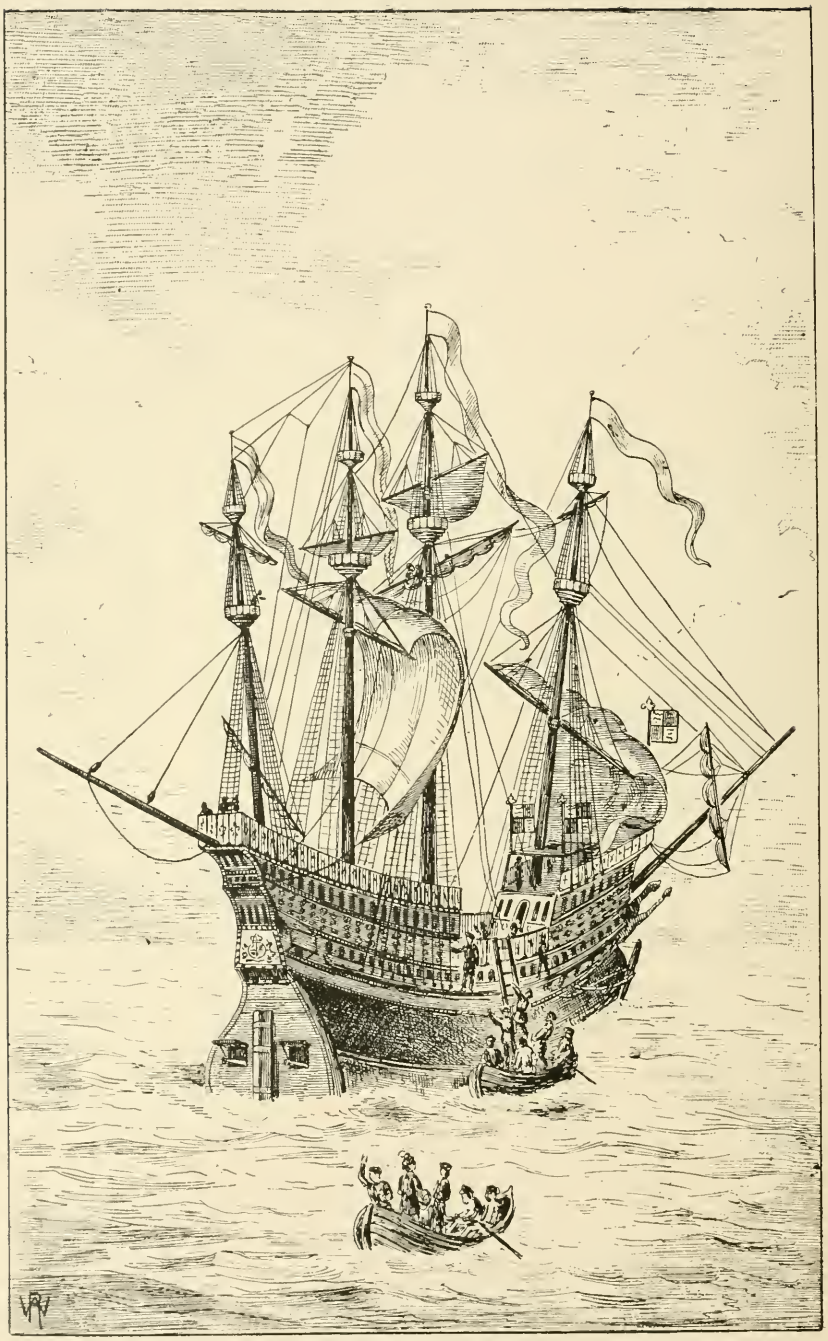
mention of its attack and defence, so the capacity of ships to keep the sea can be as well inferred from the numbers and length of the voyages now undertaken. English commerce had arisen before there were English ships to conduct it, and in the early part of the sixteenth century Candiots, Ragusans, Sicilians, Genoese, and Venetians carried English cargoes to and from London and the Mediterranean ports.* But there must have been a very rapid and complete change as the century drew on. For the service of the Queen, in repelling the Armada, the City of London, on its own account, fitted out 38 ships of the average tonnage as then counted, of 161 tons, and average crews of 71 men†; 197 ships, averaging 151 tons each, and carrying on an average 89 men per ship, were got together on that occasion under the different leaders on the English side.‡ And as the voyages to the Coasts of Guinea, to the Levant, and to the ports of the Baltic were now freely prosecuted, it is obvious that there was an abundant shipping of sea-going capacity. As to size, amongst the war-ships of Elizabeth, Lord Howard of Effingham had under him the *Triumph*, of 1,100 tons and 500 men; the *White Bear*, of 1,000 tons and 500 men; the *Ark Royal*, of 800 tons and 425 men; the *Victory*, of the like tonnage and 400 men; the *Elizabeth-Bonaventure*, the *Mary Rose*, the *Hope*, and the galley *Bonasolia*, all of 600 tons and 250 men; besides six ships of 500 tons, and a considerable number of about 300 tons.

The change in the character of the ships, and their greater seaworthiness, must be left more to inference than to proof, as there is very little that is authentic as to how ships were really constructed, rigged, and armed before the reign of Charles I. and the era of the Petts. Accurate marine artists scarcely existed before the times of the Vandevelds, the father born in 1610 and the son in 1633. Yet it is probable that the ships of Henry VIII. bore a not remote resemblance to that given in the illustration, and if we compare it with the certainly authentic outlines of the *Speaker*, a Commonwealth ship of 1653, and suppose the change from the one type to

* Hakluyt, quoted in Charnock, vol. ii., p. 7.

† It is, perhaps, better to go by the number of men than by the tonnage as given. Monson gives tonnage as length × breadth × depth, which would give much more than the displacement. But if, as Mr. W. H. White thinks, the tonnage was the number of butts or "tuns" which could be stowed, the tonnage was much less than the displacement. See Monson's *Naval Tracts*, Book iii., and *Manual of Naval Architecture*, First Edition, p. 39.

‡ Entick, p. 261.

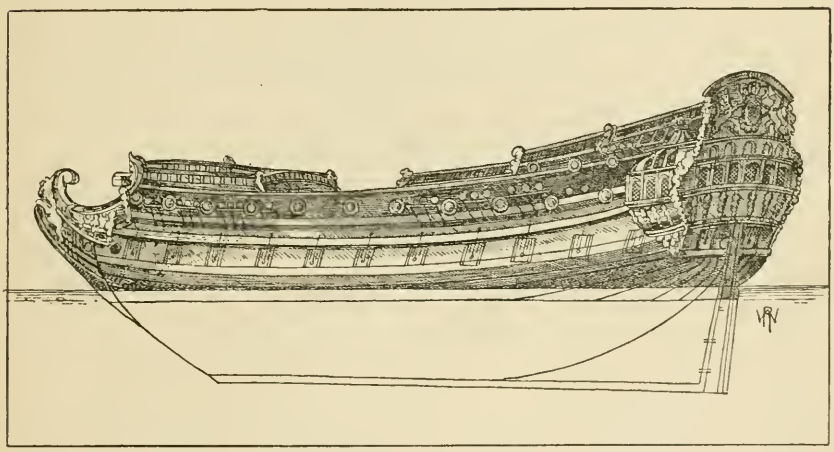


SHIP OF HENRY VIII.

the other to have been gradual, we can picture the intermediate types which occupied the field in the reign of Elizabeth.

So that, as the century approached its close, we had the two things necessary to establish purely naval war—abundant sea-borne commerce, and abundance of sea-going and sea-keeping war-ships. The inevitable result follows, that cross-ravaging from land to land falls into the back-ground; the sea is regarded more and more as a territory necessary to be held by the nation which desires to win in naval war; and it begins to be understood that if attacks on territory, to make which the forces must cross the sea, are to be resisted, the enemy must be met before he leaves the water.

But yet was it a new thing, and so considered for some scores of



HULL OF THE "SPEAKER."

years, to have war upon the water alone. So new, that one of the chief actors in these times of change, writing long after the change had fully established itself, mentioned with something like contempt, as "a mere action at sea," the dispatch of a squadron in 1590 under Sir John Hawkins and Frobisher, which, though it made no captures, stopped the whole trade from the West Indies to Spain in that year.

Yet, though the fact was not thoroughly perceived at the time, the vast amount of Spanish riches which were afloat forced the war with Spain and made it a naval one. The ravaging of Spanish territory by the English no doubt hurt Spain, but the capture of the Spanish galleons not only hurt Spain more, but enriched the captors and the nation to which they belonged. Spain, however,

was even less conscious than England of the change which was being effected in maritime warfare. She attempted to work on the lines which had been possible three-quarters of a century earlier, in the absence of commerce and sea-going ships; and her grand and crowning error of the Armada was simply the embodiment of false notions as to the inevitable character of naval war.

It is curious and interesting to trace the form of naval war, emerging confusedly and gradually during the eighteen years that covered the struggle between England and Spain; but it is still more impressive to read the words of the chief actors in this struggle after it was over, and to observe how entirely they had accepted the new conditions and enunciated the line of policy, even in those early years, which successful naval war has ever since followed. I shall, therefore, run lightly through the principal incidents of the Spanish war, commenting as may be necessary while I proceed, and I shall then quote the emphatic language of Sir William Monson in 1640, when he was a retired officer, and of the unfortunate Sir Walter Raleigh during his twelve years' imprisonment in the Tower.

Drake's first expedition to the West Indies was in 1585, and this was entirely on the military reprisal plan, or on the system of cross-ravaging; so he sacked San Domingo, Cartagena, Santa Justina in Florida, and then returned home. But in 1587 we begin to see a change. Drake proceeds to Cadiz, not for the purpose of cross-ravaging, but to destroy the shipping which constituted the supply of the great armada preparing at Lisbon. Having succeeded in this enterprize, he fell somewhat back into the older grooves by assaulting certain castles on the coast of Spain; but, becoming aware of the real ineffectiveness of such proceedings, he steered for the Western Islands for the interruption of the enemy's commerce, then represented by an immense and valuable carrack expected from Mozambique. He succeeded in his object, and brought his great prize to England. Monson, not yet wholly alive to the real nature of naval war, but still in part comprehending, says of the first voyage :—

> And though this voyage proved both fortunate and victorious, yet considering it was rather an awakening than a weakening of him (the King of Spain), it had been far better to have wholly declined than to have undertaken it upon such slender grounds and with so inconsiderable forces.

Of the second voyage, the Admiral says :—

> This voyage proceeded prosperously, and without exception, for there was both honour and wealth gained, and the enemy greatly endamaged.*

* Monson's *Naval Tracts*, Book i.

The next year, 1588, was the Armada year, as to which nothing need here be said; but 1589 witnessed two expeditions, one under Drake, with land forces, as an attempt to replace the King of Portugal on his throne, which was of a wholly public character; and the other under the Earl of Cumberland, which was almost wholly an attack on the commerce of the Roman Catholic League against Henry IV., and of Spain. This was of the partly royal and partly commercial character which the state of the times favoured. Drake's expedition was a failure, due, it is said, to having wasted time in an abortive attempt on Corunna, or the Groyne, as it was then called. But it must be remembered that this was an entirely legitimate expedition, inasmuch as it was perfectly certain that the terrible defeat of the Armada had cleared the sea of Spanish war ships for some time to come. The Earl of Cumberland began by capturing three of the League ships in the Channel. Then he took £7,000 worth of spices belonging to Spain out of Portuguese ships off the coast of Portugal. Then he proceeded to the island of Flores, where he captured an outward-bound Spaniard. Then, in the Road of Fayal, he made prize of Spanish ships. Later, he took a French League ship returning home from Canada. Then he forced the little island of Graciosa to afford him provisions and refreshment. Off Terceira, he took a Spanish ship worth £100,000, and then, on his return towards the coast of Spain, he made two prizes, each worth £7,000, and a third he drew out from under the guns of the castle of St. Mary's, worth a like sum. The only thing this expedition undertook which was in the nature of cross-ravaging, but which was, in the absence of any possible interruption from Spanish ships, an act always found proper to be performed in like circumstances, was the sacking of the town of Fayal.

In 1590 was the expedition of Hawkins and Frobisher to the coasts of Spain and the Western Islands, to destroy the Spanish trade. This squadron was seven months at sea, and did not make a single capture of importance, and was what Monson characterized it, half in contempt and half understanding how completely it had fulfilled its mission, "a bare action at sea." Spain was recovering from the blow of 1588, and even got so far as to propose to meet the fleet of Hawkins and Frobisher at sea. But realising the disaster that would follow a second defeat, and not having force enough to make success certain, Philip recalled his ships and left the English fleet free to lie across the Spanish trade route and to hold it. But as the least of two evils, consequent on

this position of his enemy, the King of Spain forbade the sailing of the ships from the West Indies, and so abandoned the whole of the nation's sea-borne foreign commerce for one year. This was really a blow of the heaviest character to Spain, and, as we shall see, is the penalty that must be paid by the weaker naval power. But in this case it was still worse for Spain, as, in the then unsheathed state of ships' bottoms, lying in tropical waters for a summer produced weakness of structure almost amounting to disablement, from the ravages of the worm. As a consequence, about a hundred of these detained ships were lost, with their rich cargoes, on the return voyage to Spain next year.

In 1591 Lord Thomas Howard took command of a fleet to the Western Islands, with the single intention of preying on Spanish commerce as before. But at this time the King of Spain had so far recovered himself as to send to sea a still larger and more powerful fleet than that of Lord Thomas Howard; this he did, and what took place is of the essence and being of naval war. In those days—though a change was even then understood to be necessary—Lord Thomas Howard's absence left the Channel uncovered, and had things been as they were, cross-raiding on English territory might have been effected by the Spaniards. But at what price? At that of the probable loss of the whole West India commercial fleet. Any damage that could possibly be done to the shores of England would have been paid for, over and over again, by the vast prize that would fall unguarded into Lord Thomas Howard's hands, while the loss to Spain by this great transfer of property would have been entirely uncompensated. Before any attacks on English soil could be thought of, Spanish commerce must be protected; and Don Alonzo de Bazan sailed to the Western Islands instead of to the Channel.

Don Alonzo's fleet was greatly superior to that of Lord Thomas, and had the latter not been warned in time, all his ships might have suffered the fate of the *Revenge* with Sir Richard Grenville in command. Howard just escaped, and the Spanish Plate Fleet was saved. But so close was the issue, that had that fleet arrived at Flores one day sooner, or had Don Alonzo arrived one day later, Howard would have made the complete success he desired. But even though the main purpose of the expedition was a failure, Howard made sufficient captures in the course of his voyage to pay all its expenses, and Spain suffered not only to that extent, but also in the loss, already detailed, of the greater part of the rescued Plate Fleet on the way home, on account of the decayed condition of the ships.

In the same year, 1591, the Earl of Cumberland made a voyage to the Spanish coast, wholly intent on the attack on Spanish commerce. Slight tangible success alone attended his exertions, but while intelligence of Don Alonzo's preparations drove him home, the fact of the Earl's being on the Spanish coast enabled him to despatch that warning to Lord Thomas Howard which allowed him to draw off his fleet in time—all but the *Revenge*.

In 1592 Frobisher, in succession to Raleigh, took a squadron to the coast of Spain and to the Islands, but this broke up and acted more or less independently, some ships on the coast and some at the Islands. Don Alonzo de Bazan, on his part, being ordered to cover the West India fleet, by so much disobeyed his instructions as to allow captures to be made which he might have prevented. But he was at sea in superior force to the English, and they were perforce driven home.

The Earl of Cumberland, in 1593, repeated the practice which was now established of warring on Spanish commerce, first on the coast of Spain, and then, at the right season, amongst the Western Islands. Captures were made, of course, but Spain repeated her practice of appearing in superior force at the Islands, and necessitating thereby the retirement of the English.

This was now the third year, during which neither side had gained much advantage, and when the guard of Spain on her commerce had been nearly complete. Such proceedings were hardly of the essence of naval war, and might have progressed for an indefinite time. If Spain was able to show superior force at sea for three successive years, she should have pushed it farther. To get any advantage, she should have followed the English fleet up and mastered it. Then she would not only have protected her commerce, but would have been a position to push her attacks closer home. The Spanish error was that they did not understand this; but possibly the question of season governed the Spanish naval policy to a greater extent than we can now easily realise.

The English, on their part, if they had rightly understood the position, would have acted with the sole purpose of mastering the Spanish fleet as a necessary preliminary to the destruction of her commerce. But probably no one then perceived what was axiomatic a century later.

Not improbably the failure to comprehend the exact position, however simple it may seem to us who have assimilated all past experience without knowing it, dictated the changed proceedings of the next few years.

The Spaniards had joined the Roman Catholic League, and in 1594 had ships in Brest, which was held in the interest of the faction. Three thousand English troops had been for some time operating in Brittany, in alliance with the troops of Henry IV., and Frobisher was now despatched with four ships to co-operate against the Spaniards, who at Brest were a threat to the security of the Channel. This operation was effectively concluded.

But cross-raiding was again uppermost in the English mind ; for in the same year, 1594, Drake and Hawkins sailed for the West Indies with the intention of landing at Nombre de Dios, marching across to Panama, and possessing themselves of all the plunder which the sacking of that *entrepôt* for silver was likely to afford. This expedition was late in sailing, because a certain fear of attacks at home grew out of the presence of Spanish ships at Brest and on the coast of Brittany. But a home squadron being fitted out, Drake and Hawkins sailed.

The fears of cross-ravaging, though exaggerated, were not without foundation, for in this year four Spanish galleys ran over from France into Mount's Bay ; their crews landed and burnt Penzance, Mouse-hole, Newlin, and a neighbouring church. Then they re-embarked, and made off as suddenly and as secretly as they had come. Not a drop of English blood was shed, and all the historians agree that it was a mere piece of bravado, without sensible aim and object ; and the galleys were seen by no one, either during their approach or on their retirement.

Before Drake and Hawkins sailed, news had reached England that a valuable Spanish carrack had put into Porto Rico damaged, and the Queen ordered them to make sure of this prize before attempting anything further. In this order, we had again a legitimate operation in the circumstances of the case. It was a worthy object ; not requiring time to achieve, and therefore not liable to interruption from the sea. The march across to Panama required the occupation of Nombre de Dios and the security of their ships, not only to lie there, but to pass freely to sea laden with the spoils gathered from the shores of the Pacific. Clear ideas on such simple points were often wanting in those days, and even in the minds of Drake and Hawkins they could hardly have been present. The ships lingered at Guadaloupe, and allowed the Spaniards both information and time enough so to secure the treasure-ship that the English attack at Porto Rico was repulsed with loss, and Hawkins died, it is said, half of this trouble. Drake proceeded to Nombre de Dios, but found the march across impracticable, and he died, too, near hand, at Porto Bello.

That which was to be expected had meantime happened; and Baskerville, who succeeded to the command, only just escaped, after a partial action, the superior fleet which Spain had sent out to interrupt, in the only way possible, the operations of the English. Most probably, the failure of the march across the isthmus was the real saving of our fleet, which might otherwise have been caught half-manned at Nombre de Dios by the more powerful Spaniards.

Monson remarks on the risen sea-power of Spain since 1591, and how, in this year, she had secured herself by two strong fleets, one of twenty sail in the West Indies and another of twenty-four sail at the Western Islands. As a consequence, so far, her commerce passed in security, though the ships saw neither a friend nor an enemy before their safe arrival at Lisbon.

She was now really mistress at sea, and had she known what was proper to be done, she would have pushed up into the Channel with all her force before the English could have got out. By so doing she would have left her commerce and all her ports free behind her, for even if she failed to meet and beat the English in their own waters, her threat must have kept them at home. But if she could meet, and could beat them, it was impossible to limit the advantages to her which would immediately follow. She would have passed the period of naval defence, and would have been ready to take up the *rôle* of attack from the sea, which was secure behind her.

She was slow to read the lesson of the time, slower even than we were; and though thus really superior at sea, she left herself entirely open to the secret, sudden, and powerful attack which was made upon Cadiz by the Lord Admiral Howard in command of the sea forces, and of Essex in command of the land forces, yet with some joint commission, in this year, 1596.

The expedition did not sail till June 1st, and it was simply fatuous on the part of Philip, that with galleys raiding on our coast the year before, he should have had absolutely nothing by way of look-out, or *avant-garde*, to give him notice that a hundred and fifty ships were preparing to embark over seven thousand land forces, and that the Dutch were incorporating themselves in the grand design. But Spain was swelling with ideas of a repetition of her great cross-raiding designs of 1588. She was not in the least conscious that her breach of all the growing principles of naval war was the primary cause of her former failure, and would be, over and over again, the causes of her future failures as long as

she continued them. She had been driving English fleets out of her own waters for four years running, and yet had not understood that water was water, and that if an English fleet fled before a Spanish one at Flores and off Cuba, the same fleet would be hard put to it off Plymouth or the Isle of Wight. But the thought was not in the Spanish Councils; they set out great ideas for the invasion of a heretic England, and the support of a rebellious yet orthodox Ireland, and they left the main body of their preparations open to the stroke of any one who chose to cross the sea to strike it.

Howard and Essex sailed, as I have said, on the 1st of June. They took the most singular precautions by means of widespread videttes, which captured or detained every sail that was seen, so that early in the morning of the 20th June the vast fleet was off Cadiz, with nothing to prevent them sailing right up and making themselves masters of the great assemblage of war and merchant ships that lay in unsuspecting tranquillity before them. But a day was lost in divided counsels, and notwithstanding the clearness of their instructions to master the ships in the first instance, and Monson's urgency as a leading naval adviser, it was not till night that the determination to attack the ships was come to. The result was that though many ships were taken, and many burnt to prevent them falling into our hands, the lesser value—the occupation of the town for fourteen days, and its ransom for 120,000 ducats—assumed the most golden hue, and the blow was not as complete as it otherwise might have been.

A point which is not cleared up in any of the histories before me, is the disposition of the Spanish fleet at this time. There were a considerable number of war-ships at Cadiz, no doubt, and some of the heaviest class. There was also at least a squadron at Lisbon, under Siriago, for six of them attacked a private expedition of the Earl of Cumberland off the Rock. But I do not gather whether the fleets of the previous year were guarding commerce this year in the West Indies and at the Azores. The English commanders knew some days before their arrival at Cadiz what ships they would find there, but it was not known to the home Government what the disposition of the Spanish fleet was, for the ascertainment of this was one of the duties enjoined upon the English commanders. Unless these had some knowledge that the sea was free behind them, they could hardly have made the serious attack they did, and would certainly not have remained as much as fourteen days in possession of the town of Cadiz.

It was a part of the Lords Generals' instructions to take the usual measures at the Western Islands for intercepting the Spanish trade, but disputes and discontents had arisen over the possible objections which might be taken at home, and no detachment westward was made. Essex was forbidden to attack Lisbon, and intelligence from Ferrol showed that no ships were there. So, as provisions were, as usual, running short, and there was no further operation open, the great fleet returned to England, arriving at Plymouth on August 8th.

Even this reverse at Cadiz, due as it was to a wholly mistaken naval policy, had no sort of legitimate effect on the Spanish mind, at least in the early part of 1597. The invasion idea was so far uppermost, that an assemblage in force began to be made at Ferrol, and the commerce at the Western Islands was left open. That could be protected only on the spot, or by a close threat in the Channel. An assemblage at Ferrol, which could hardly be in great force after the destruction at Cadiz, was not a strong threat, though in the rebellious condition of Ireland it certainly did require more notice than it had.

Essex took a fleet off the port, but having been very late in sailing—he only left Plymouth on August 17th—owing both to late preparations and to adverse weather, the Spaniards were amply secured against the simple raiding attack by part of the fleet, which was alone practicable. A determination was now come to which was only justified by want of full comprehension of what naval war necessitated. Essex sailed for the Western Islands, leaving it quite open to the Spanish fleet to follow him there, and perhaps fall on him at the least opportune moment, or else to deal such blows in our home waters as might be open to him. This move of Essex would have been entirely a false one had the English commerce been abreast of that of Spain in value, or near it, for then the Spanish ships might not only have fallen upon the English property at sea, and sent it securely into their own ports, but they were in a position to recapture the English prizes in returning to their home ports, if not to give battle to the returning war-ships in a presumably weakened state. The course taken was only less blamable, because English commerce did not approach the value of that of Spain.

But the operations suggested were open to the Spaniards, and they were at sea the day after Essex left.* Their plan was to use their

* Berkley, p. 420.

local control of the sea in order to seize Falmouth or some western English port, and to use it as a base in which to rest and await the return of the fleet of Essex. Had their seamanship been equal to their strategy they might have done great things, and perhaps turned the tables on this occasion; but a heavy gale off Scilly dispersed the Spanish fleet when on its way to fulfil the mission, and the ships returned to their own ports, allowing Essex to bring home in safety the few prizes he had picked up to the westward.

We can easily trace the growing laws of naval war, unalterable and immutable if it is to be carried on with a view to the certain advantage of either side, and thereby to a speedy conclusion. We have seen Spain on her side able to guard and protect her trade by appearing in force at the point of attack; and we have seen her leave her chief port and source of greatness wholly open to the sudden attack of a fleet of whose approach she had no dreams. Now we see her making one forward step in advancing her base to Ferrol, and meditating operations in British waters. But as late as the middle of August, that is, when the season of naval operations is drawing to a close, the Spanish fleet has made no effort, and lies in its own port, masked by that of Essex. Only, therefore, by beating this fleet of Essex, or by some strategical error on the part of its commander, could the Spanish fleet have achieved its purpose. Meantime, unless there was a second fleet on the Spanish coast, and a third at the Western Islands, Spain is left open to attack by a second English fleet, supposing there was one, either on her commerce or on her territory.

But Essex commits the only error open to him. On the chance that he may do more damage to Spain in the Western Islands than Spain can do in the Channel, he sails away to that quarter, leaving everything open behind him. Because little or nothing was done on either side, we must not suppose that such breaches of plain law could be committed with impunity. It was only by error and mismanagement that Essex failed to possess himself of the whole of the Spanish West Indian ships at one *grand coup*. The attack on Falmouth would perhaps have been made, and all that was to follow it carried out, had it not been for the heavy weather which occurred so opportunely to save the credit of Essex.*

But the reason of the whole matter is simple, and can be simply

* It may be stated that the English had the belief that the Spanish fleet would, as usual, fly to protect its trade, but in the later years of naval war no such belief would have been allowed to operate.

put. Supposing that the English damage to Spanish trade, and Spanish damage in the Channel, were of equal moment to each of the nations at war, how was either to be advantaged if both damages were done, any more than if neither were done? Such cross-damaging can be of no force in bringing either nation to terms, and was much more calculated to exasperate and prolong the war. If Spain, then, committed the error of being too late in the Channel, and not in strength to have fought Essex fairly at sea, Essex should have held her fleet masked at Ferrol till the end of the season, and it would have been possible that a small detachment might have operated successfully upon the Spanish trade. The Spaniards were hardly wrong to have proceeded to carry out their intention of intercepting Essex on his return, rather than of following him to the Islands, though, as in former years, they might have secured their trade directly by the earlier despatch westward of the necessary force.

It would almost seem as if these simple but great principles were now forcing themselves into men's minds as new light. For the Queen sent out no fleet next year (1598), and Spain made no move. There was but a private raiding expedition of the Earl of Cumberland, which, after blocking, and so killing, the outward trade of Spain, made descents on the Canaries and Porto Rico.

The transactions of the year 1599 were of a nature to give further form and substance to rules and maxims which, though congealing in parts, were still soft and unstable.

I cannot write [says Monson] of anything done in this year of 1599, for there was never greater expectation of war with less performance. Whether it was a mistrust the one nation had of the other, or a policy held on both sides to make peace with sword in hand, a treaty being entertained by consent of each prince, I am not to examine; but sure I am, the preparation was on both sides very great, as if the one expected an invasion from the other, and yet it was generally conceived not to be intended by either; but that ours had only relation to my Lord of Essex, who was then in England, and had a design to try his friends in England, and to be revenged of his enemies, as he pretended, and as it proved afterwards by his fall. Howsoever it was, the change was not so great as necessary, for it was commonly known that the Adelentado had drawn both his ships and galleys to the Groyne; which was not usually done, but for some action intended upon England or Ireland, though he converted them afterwards to another use; for the galleys were sent into the Low Countries, and passed the narrow seas whilst our ships lay there. And with the fleet, the Adelentado pursued the Hollanders to the Islands, whither he suspected they were gone. This fleet of Hollanders, which consisted of 73 sail, were the first ships that ever displayed their colours in warlike sort against the Spaniards in any action of their own, for how cruel soever the war seemed to be in Holland, they maintained a peaceable trade in Spain, and abused us. This first action of the Hollanders at sea proved not very successful; for after the spoil of a town in the Canaries, and some hurt done to the Island of St. Tome, they kept the sea for seven or eight months, in which time

their General and most of their men sickened and died, and the rest returned with loss and shame. Another benefit which we received by this preparation was, that our men were now taught suddenly to arm, every man knowing his command, and how to be commanded, which before they were ignorant of; and who knows not that sudden and false alarms in an army are sometimes necessary? To say the truth, the expedition which was then used in drawing together so great an army by land, and rigging so great and royal a navy to sea, in so little a space of time, was so admirable in other countries, that they received a terror by it; and many that came from beyond sea, said the Queen was never more dreaded abroad for anything she ever did.

Frenchmen that came aboard our ships did wonder (as at a thing incredible) that Her Majesty had rigged, victualled, and furnished her royal ships to sea in twelve days' time; and Spain, as an enemy, had reason to fear and grieve to see this sudden preparation.*

The armament consisted of nineteen Queen's ships under Lord Thomas Howard; they assembled in the Downs, but after a month there, the threat had presumably done its work, for the ships were recalled and dismantled.

But the assemblage, following on a year's inaction, and that again following on the experienced dangers of certain strategical operations, dangers which it does not appear were recognized before, would seem to indicate the working of a leaven which would ultimately leaven the whole lump, and fix in men's minds the nature of the inherent principles of naval war.

The year 1600 witnessed the founding of the East India Company, and the sailing of three of their merchant ships under the guidance of James Lancaster, and thus the further development of the strength of a maritime nation in peace and of its weakness in war. The only naval operation was the despatch by England of a small squadron to attack Spanish trade at the Western Islands, and its being driven off by the threat of a much larger Spanish squadron. The Spanish trade however avoided all chances of capture by pursuing a route altogether clear of the Islands, so that Sir Richard Lewson, who commanded the English squadron, saw not a hostile sail.

But the next year, 1601, again saw some relapse into the practice of cross-raiding, for while the English devoted themselves to assisting the Low Countries against the Spaniards, they left the sea so open that late in the year, when indeed, according to usage, fleets should be seeking their home ports, the Spaniards made for the port of Kinsale in Ireland with forty-eight ships and four thousand troops, and landed there.

But it cannot be said that this operation was a complete restoration of the practice of cross-raiding, for the Spaniards

* *Naval Tracts*, Book i., 1599.

were in alliance with the rebel Earl Tyrone, and might plausibly adventure a flying column into what might prove a friendly country. Yet did the result yield its experience, and add to the accumulating evidence of the existence of rule in naval war.

Tyrone, on his side, failed to effect the junction which was sought. The Spaniards found themselves shut up in the town of Kinsale by the army of Mountjoy, which had already defeated Tyrone, while on the sea side they were blocked by Sir Richard Lewson. Yielding was a necessity, in the absence of all control of the sea, and the Spanish army was carefully conducted back to its own country, never again to illustrate their failure to apprehend the possible in conducting war with a maritime power.

But England, on her side, was more receptive of the lessons to be learnt. In March 1602, Lewson and Monson sailed "to infest the Spanish coast with a continual fleet,"* and, with an interval of return, this "infesting" was pushed far into the autumn, and Monson did not quit the Spanish waters till the 21st October; a feat proving not only the capacity of the man, but his growing knowledge of the art of naval war, and the capabilities of the instruments for waging it. His attacks were wholly confined to shipping, and were very successful. The Spanish fleet was, however, much superior to his own; it was at sea, but never succeeded in coming into contact with this consummate seaman, who could think and act.

It was as if all the outlines of naval war had been marked when the Queen died next year (1603), for her fleet was prepared to start for the coast of Spain as early as February, and to remain there till November; a policy which would have held the naval forces of Spain in absolute check, unless she could have faced and beaten the English; while the latter would have had the free sea behind them either to prosecute their own commerce in peace or to stifle that of the enemy.

It had taken all these eighteen years to learn the lesson that nothing can be done of consequence in naval war till one side secures the control of the water area. But even then it was not clear to men's minds that this control must either be acknowledged by the side which has it not, and all its disabilities admitted; or else it must be fought for by all the naval strength either side is capable of putting forth.

Yet were the main principles partly apprehended and partly set forth by the two authorities, whose opinions I now quote in

* *Naval Tracts*, Book i., 1602.

fulfilment of my promise at the beginning of the chapter. Thus writes Sir William Monson :—

Whilst the Spaniards were employed at home by our yearly fleets, they never had opportunity nor leisure either to make an attempt upon us, or to divert the wars from themselves ; by which means we were secured from any attempt of theirs, as will appear by what follows.

The Spaniards stood so much in awe of Her Majesty's ships, that when a few of them appeared on the coast they commonly diverted their enterprises—as, namely, in the year 1587, when Sir Francis Drake, with twenty-five ships, prevented an expedition that summer out of Cadiz Road for England, which the next year after they attempted in 1588, because not molested as the year before.

Our action in Portugal, following so quick upon the overthrow in 1588, made the King of Spain so far unable to offend, that if the undertaking had been prosecuted with judgment, he had been in ill circumstances to defend it, or his other kingdoms.

From that year to the year 1591 he grew great by sea, because he was not busied by us as before ; which appeared by the fleet that took the *Revenge* ; which armada of his, it is very likely, had been employed against England had it not been diverted that year by my Lord Thomas Howard.

And for four years together after this the King employed his ships to the Islands, to guard his merchants from the Indies, which made him have no leisure to think of England.

The voyage to Cadiz in 1596 did not only frustrate his intended action against England, but we destroyed many of his ships and provisions that should have been employed on that Service.

He designed the second revenge upon England, but was prevented by my Lord of Essex to the islands ; which action of his, if it had been well carried, and that my lord would have believed good advice, it had utterly ruined the King of Spain.

The next year that gave cause of fear to the Queen, was 1599, the King of Spain having a whole year, by our sufferance, to make his provisions, and brought his ships and army down to the Groyne ; which put the Queen to a more chargeable defensive war than the value our offensive fleet would have been maintained with upon his coast.

This great expedition was diverted by the fleet of Holland, which the Adelentando pursued to the Islands.

The following years, 1600 and 1601, there was hope of peace, and nothing was attempted on either side till the latter end of 1601 that he invaded Ireland ; but with ill-success, as you have heard.

The last summer, 1602, he was braved by Her Majesty's ships in the mouth of his harbour with the loss of a carrack, and rendered unable to prosecute his designs against Ireland, for no sooner was Sir Richard Lewson returned but Sir William Monson was sent back again upon that coast, as you have heard, who kept the King's forces so employed, that he betook himself only to the guard of his shores.

It is not the meanest mischief we shall do to the King of Spain, if we thus war upon him, to force him to keep his shores still armed and guarded, to the infinite vexation, charge, and discontent of his subjects ; for no time or place can secure them so long as they see or know us to be upon that coast.

The sequel of all these actions being duly considered, we may be confident that whilst we busy the Spaniards at home, they dare not think of invading England or Ireland ; for by their absence their fleet from the Indies may be endangered, and in their attempts they have as little hope of prevailing.*

Surely I hold [says Sir Walter Raleigh] that the best way is to keep our enemies from treading upon our ground ; wherein, if we fail, then must we seek to make him

* *Naval Tracts*, Book i., 1603

wish that he had stayed at his own home. In such a case, if it should happen, our judgments are to weigh many particular circumstances, that belongs not to this discourse. But making the question general, the position, whether England, without the help of her fleet, be able to debar an enemy from landing, I hold that it is unable to do so; and, therefore, I think it most dangerous to make the adventure. For the encouragement of a first victory to an enemy, and the discouragement of being beaten to the invaded, may draw after it a most perilous consequence.

Great difference, I know there is, and diverse consideration to be had, between such a country as France is, strengthened with many fortified places, and this of ours, where our ramparts are but the bodies of men. But I say that an army to be transported over sea, and to be landed again in an enemy's country, and the place left to the choice of the invader cannot be resisted on the coast of England without a fleet to impeach it; no, nor on the coast of France, or any other country, except every creek, port, or sandy bay had a powerful army in each of them to make opposition. . . . For there is no man ignorant that ships, without putting themselves out of breath, will easily outrun the soldiers that coast them.

"*Les armées ne volent point en poste*—armies neither flye nor run post," saith a marshal of France. And I know it to be true that a fleet of ships may be seen at sunset and after it, at the Lizard, and yet by next morning they may recover Portland; whereas an army of foot shall not be able to march it in six dayes. Again, when those troops lodged on the sea shores should be forced to run from place to place in vain, after a fleet of ships, they will at length sit down in the midway, and leave all at adventure.*

If we regard the utterances of these leaders of the Elizabethan era, and remember that what they wrote was not to set forth the principles of naval war in the abstract, but as they applied to the circumstances of their own country at the time, we shall understand to some extent how far they went towards full comprehension, and where they stopped short of it.

Both laid stress on the paramount importance of operations by sea. In Monson's opinion it was only by transferring the war to the sea coasts of Spain that an advantage could be gained in attack; while Raleigh was clear that an attack coming over sea could only be met at sea. Neither leader gives any countenance to the old idea that the attack of one power on the territory of the other could be met by a counter attack of the same character. It follows that in both their minds the age of cross-raiding had passed away, and that the age of naval war as such, naval war absolutely on the sea, had taken its place.

In both their eyes, the policy of Spain must have been a mistaken one, unless she was driven to it by a clear sense of her inferiority at sea. But then, if she were clearly inferior at sea, both

* Raleigh, *History of the World.* Quoted by Creasy, *Fifteen Decisive Battles*, &c., p. 365. I only possess the abridgement of Raleigh's works published by his grandson Philip Raleigh. But it is remarkable how completely that great man relies on ancient examples for modern guidance. The Roman and Greek experiences serve him continually with lessons for the English of James's time.

men would have held that all her attempted raids on territory were practically useless. If she was not absolutely inferior at sea, and Monson was clearly of opinion that she was not so from 1591 to 1595, then her course of policy was from Monson's own showing a wrong one, except upon the ground of the enormous superiority of her commerce to ours. "The King employed his ships to the islands, to guard his merchants from the Indies, which made him have no leisure to think of England." Quite so. But if English commerce offered as important a field of attack as that of Spain, when looked at from the point of view of national importance, a Spanish attack upon English commerce would have left England "with no leisure to think of" Spain.

But in any case, the appearance of Spanish fleets in the Channel must, in Monson's opinion, have had just the same paralyzing effect on the English fleets—as far as any attack on Spain was concerned—as the presence of English fleets in Spanish waters confessedly had on those of Spain. Monson must have been perfectly clear on this abstract proposition or he could not have urged, as he did, the importance of the English fleet's getting away for Spain as early as February. To be first in the field was the point. And the force that was first in the field must hold all the superiority of that position until it was beaten at sea.

The control of the sea, or what I shall now and hereafter call by its established title, the "Command of the Sea," was henceforth to be understood as the aim of naval war. A power striving for anything else, such as evasions, or surprises of ports or territories, or merely defensive guardings of commerce, accepted the position of the inferior and beaten naval power, and could never hope, so long as she maintained that attitude, of seriously damaging her opponent.

CHAPTER II.

The Struggle for the Command of the Sea.

True naval war is established when there is sufficient property at sea to make its loss of serious importance to the State owning it; and when there are sea-keeping war-ships to attack it.—It may be attacked directly and defended directly, as in the earlier phases of the first Dutch war; or sea-borne commerce may be destroyed if the command of the sea is first obtained by the direct defeat of the enemy's war fleets, as in the later phases of the war.—Single victories cannot, however, give command of the sea for any time unless the naval force defeated has also been annihilated.—Though both the Dutch and English gained victories, they were merely steps towards the command of the sea, and the struggle was really still in progress when peace was made.

In the last chapter I endeavoured to show how, in consequence of the presence of two requirements, large sea-borne commerce and war-ships capable of keeping the sea, naval warfare was settling into form at the close of the reign of Elizabeth. Its necessities, and the fixed rules arising out of those necessities, were becoming clear to English seamen who had full experience of the actualities surrounding and controlling it. But though knowledge of the subject had greatly advanced, it was probably the few and not the many who could look forward to a complete method in naval warfare.

Commerce, I have observed, was chiefly on one side in the Spanish war, and the side which owned it was that which had the least clear views of the right way to keep it and to defend it. The war-ships were still not of a wholly sea-keeping character, and the question of their supply was one which nearly always governed their movements and their capacity for keeping the sea.

In the peaceful years that followed through the reigns of James I. and Charles I. two things went on side by side, a wider distribution of sea-borne commerce, and a continual improvement in the character of the war-ships as well as of others. These were the

things which governed the nature of naval war, and as they grew towards a standard of completeness they necessarily tended to define and harden the rules under which naval war would in future be carried on. Perhaps the best idea of these growths may be gathered from the perusal of a nearly complete quotation from the latter part of Raleigh's *Discourse of the First Invention of Ships, and the several parts thereof.*

Whosoever were the inventers, we find that every age hath added somewhat to ships, and to all things else. And in mine own time the shape of our English ships hath been greatly bettered. It is not long since the striking of the topmast (a wonderful ease to great ships, both at sea and in harbour) hath been devised, together with the chain pump, which takes up twice as much water as the ordinary did. We have lately added the Bonnet and the Drabler. To the courses we have devised studding-sails, topgallant-sails, spritsails, topsails. The weighing of anchors by the capstone is also new. We have fallen into consideration of the length of cables, and by it we resist the malice of the greatest winds that can blow. Witness our small Milbrooke men of Cornwal, that ride it out at anchor half seas over between England and Ireland, all the winter quarter. And witness the Hollanders that were wont to ride before Dunkirk with the wind at North-West, making a lee-shoar in all weathers. For true it is, that the length of the cable is the life of the ship in all extremities, and the reason is, because it makes so many bendings and waves, as the ship, riding at that length, is not able to stretch it; and nothing breaks that is not stretcht in extremity. We carry our ordnance better than we were wont, because our nether over-loops* are raised commonly from the water, to wit, between the lower port and the sea.

In King Henry the Eighth's time, and in his presence, at Portsmouth, the *Mary Rose*, by a little sway of the ship in tacking about, her ports being within sixteen inches of the water, was overset and lost. . . .

We have also raised our second decks, and given more vent thereby to our ordnance lying on our nether-loop. We have added cross pillars in our royal ships to strengthen them, which be fastened from the keelson to the beam of the second deck to keep them from setting or from giving way in all distresses.

We have given longer floors to our ships than in elder times, and better bearing under water, whereby they never fall into the sea after the head and shake the whole body, nor sink stern, nor stoop upon a wind, by which the breaking loose of our ordnance, or of the not use of them, with many other discommodities are avoided.

And, to say the truth, a miserable shame and dishonour it were for our shipwrights if they did not exceed all others in the setting up our Royal ships, the errors of other nations being far more excusable than ours. For the Kings of England have for many years been at the charge to build and furnish a navy of powerful ships for their own defence, and for the wars only. Whereas the French, the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Hollanders (till of late) have had no proper fleet belonging to their Princes or States. Only the Venetians for a long time have maintained their arsenal of gallies. And the Kings of Denmark and Sweden have had good ships for these last fifty years.

I say that the aforenamed kings, especially the Spaniards and Portugals, have ships of great bulk, but fitter for the merchant than for the man-of-war, for burthen than for battel. But as Popelimire well observeth, the forces of Princes by sea are marques de grandeux d'estate—marks of the greatness of an estate—for whosoever commands the sea, commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world,

* Meaning the lower gun-deck. The term "over-loop" (German, *überlauf*) became lost in the term *orlop*, as applied to the deck below the lower gun-deck.

commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself. Yet can I not deny but that the Spaniards, being afraid of their Indian fleets, have built some few very good ships; but he hath no ships in garrison, as his Majesty hath; and to say the truth, no sure place to keep them in, but in all invasions he is driven to take up of all nations which come into his ports for trade.

The Venetians, while they attended their fleets and imployed themselves in their Eastern conquest, were great and powerful Princes, and commanded the maritime ports of Croatia, Dalmatia, Albania, and Epirus; were lords of Pelopounessus and the islands adjoyning; of Cyprus, Candia, and many other places. But after they sought to greaten themselves in Italy itself, using strangers for the commanders of their armies, the Turks by degrees beat them out of all their goodly countries, and have now confined them (Candia excepted) to a few small Grecian islands, which, with great charge and difficulty they enjoy.

The first honour they obtained was by making war upon the Istrii by sea; and had they been true to their spouse, to meet the sea, which once a year they marry, the Turk had never prevailed against them nor never been able to besiege any place of theirs, to which he must have transported his armies by his gallies.

The Genoeses were also exceeding powerful by sea, and held many places in the East, and contended often with the Venetians for superiority, destroying each other in a long-continued sea war. Yea, the Genoeses were the most famous mercenaries of all Europe, both by sea and land for many years.

The French assisted themselves by land with the cross-bowers of Genoa against the English; namely, at the battel of Cressy the French had 12,000 cross-bowers. By sea also with their great ships, called the carrecks of Genoa, they always strengthened their fleets against the English. But after Mahomet the Second had taken Constantinople, they lost Caffa, and all Taurica Chersonesus, with the whole trade of the Euxine Sea. And although they sent many supplies by the Hellespont, yet having often felt the smart of the Turk's cannon, they began to slack their succours, and were soon after supplanted. Yet do the Venetians to this day well maintain their estate by their sea forces; and a great loss it is to the Christian commonwealth in general that they are less than they were; and a precipitate counsel it was of those Christian kings, their neighbours, when they joyned in league against them; seeing they then were, and they yet are, the strongest rampiers of Europe against the Turks.

But the Genoeses have now but a few gallies, being altogether degenerate, and become merchants of money, and the Spanish king's backers.

But all the states and kingdoms of the world have changed form and policy.

The Empire itself, which gave light to all principalities like a Pharoa, or high tower to all sea-men, is now sunk down to the level of the soil . . . insomuch as it is now become the most confused estate in the world, consisting of an Empire in title without territory, who can ordain nothing of importance but by a Dyet, or Assembly of the Estates of many free princes, ecclesiastical and temporal, in effect of equal force, diverse in religion and faction; and of Free Cities and Hanse towns, whom the princes do not more desire to command, than they scorn to obey. Notwithstanding, being far less than they were in number, and less in force and reputation; as they are not greatly able to offend others, so they have enough to do (being seated far asunder) to defend themselves. . . . .

The Castilians in the meanwhile are grown great, and (by mistaking) esteemed the greatest; having by marriage, conquest, practice, and purchase, devoured all the kingdoms within Spain, with Naples, Sicily, Millain, and the Netherlands; and many places belonging to the Empire, and the princes thereof, besides the Indies, East and West, the islands of the West Ocean, and many places in Barbary, Guinea, Congo, and elsewhere.

France hath also enlarged itself by the one-half, and reduced Normandy, Britany,

Aquitaine, with all that the English had on that side the sea, together with Languedock, Foix, Arminach, Bierne, and Dauphinie. For this kingdom of Great Britain, it hath had of His Majesty a strong addition. The postern by which we were so often heretofore entered and surprized is now made up; and we shall not hereafter need the double face of Janus, to look north and south at once.

But there's no estate grown in haste but that of the United Provinces, and especially in their sea forces, and by a contrary way to that of France and Spain; the latter by invasion, the former by oppression. For I myself may remember when one ship of Her Majesty's would have made forty Hollanders strike sail and come to an anchor. They did not then dispute *de Mari Libero*, but readily acknowledged the English to be *Domini Maris Britannici*. That we are less powerful than we were, I do hardly believe it; for, although we have not at this time 135 ships belonging to the subject of 500 tons each ship, as it is said we had in the twenty-fourth year of Queen Elizabeth; at which time also, upon a general view and muster, there were found in England of able men fit to bear arms, 1,172,000, yet are our merchant ships now far more warlike and better appointed than they were, and the navy royal double as strong as it then was. For these were the ships of Her Majesty's navy at that time:

1. The *Triumph.*
2. The *Elizabeth Jonas.*
3. The *White Bear.*
4. The *Philip and Mary.*
5. The *Bonadventure.*
6. The *Golden Lyon.*
7. The *Victory.*
8. The *Revenge.*
9. The *Hope.*
10. The *Mary Rose.*
11. The *Dreadnought.*
12. The *Minion.*
13. The *Swiftsure.*

To which there have been added:—

14. The *Antilope.*
15. The *Foresight.*
16. The *Swallow.*
17. The *Handmaid.*
18. The *Jennett.*
19. The *Bark of Bullein.*
20. The *Ayde.*
21. The *Achates.*
22. The *Falcon.*
23. The *Tyger.*
24. The *Bull.*

We have not, therefore, less force than we had, the fashion, and furnishing of our ships considered, for there are in England at this time 400 sail of merchants, and fit for the wars, which the Spaniards would call gallions; to which we may add 200 sail of crumsters, or hoys, of Newcastle, which, each of them, will bear six Demi-culverins* and four Sakers,† needing no other addition of building than a slight spar deck fore and aft, as the seamen call it, which is a slight deck throughout. The 200 which may be chosen out of 400, by reason of their ready staying and turning, by reason of their windwardness, and by reason of their drawing of little water, they are of extream advantage near the shoar, and in all bays and rivers, to turn in and out. These, I say, alone, and well manned and well conducted, would trouble the greatest Prince in Europe to encounter them in our seas; for they stay and turn so readily, as ordering them into small squadrons, that three of them at once may give their broadside upon any one great ship, or upon any angle or side of an enemy's fleet, they shall be able to continue a perpetual volley of Demi-culverins without intermission, and either sink and slaughter the men, or utterly disorder any fleet of cross-sails with which they encounter.‡

* A 9½-pounder of 30 cwt.

† A 5½-pounder of 12½ cwt.

‡ Presumably the vessels Raleigh speaks of were fore-and-aft rigged; and the "cross-sails" were square-rigged ships.

I say, then, if a vanguard be ordained of those hoyes, who will easily recover the wind of any other sort of ships, with a battle of 400 other warlike ships, and a Rear of thirty of His Majesty's ships to sustain, relieve, and countenance the rest (if God beat them not) I know not what strength can be gathered in all Europe to beat them. And if it be objected that the States can furnish a far greater number, I answer that His Majesty's 40 ships, added to 600 before named, are of incomparable greater force than all that Holland and Zealand can furnish for the wars. As also, that a greater number would breed the same confusion that was found in Xerxes' land army of seventeen hundred thousand soldiers; for there is a certain proportion, both by sea and land, beyond which the excess brings nothing but disorder and amazement.

Of these hoyes, carvils, or crumsters, (call them what you will) there was a notable experience made in the year 1574, in the river of Antwerp near Rumerswael, where the Admiral Boysott with his crumsters overthrew the Spanish fleet of great ships conducted by Julian Romero; so contrary to the expectation of Don Lewis, the great Commander and Lieutenant of the Netherlands for the King of Spain, as he came to the banks of Bergen to behold the slaughter of the Zealanders; but contrary to his expectation he beheld his comrades, some of them sunk, some of them thrust on the shoar, and most of the rest mastered and possessed by his enemies; insomuch as his great Captain, Romero, with great difficulty, some say in a skiff, some say by swimming, saved himself.

The like success had Captain Wrest of Zealand against the fleet which transported the Duke of Medina Celi, who was sent out of Spain by sea to govern the Netherlands, in place of the Duke of Alva, for with twelve crumsters or hoyes, of the first troop of 21 sail, he took all but three, and forced the second, being twelve great ships filled with 2,000 soldiers, to run under the Rammekins, being then in the Spaniard's possession.

But whence comes this dispute? Not from the increase of numbers, not because our neighbours breed more mariners than we do; nor from the greatness of their trade in all parts of the world. For the French creep into all corners of America and Africa as they do, and the Spaniards and Portugals employ more ships by many, (the fishing trade excepted) than the Netherlands do; but it comes from the detestable covetousness of such particular persons as have gotten licenses, and given way to the transportation of our English ordnance.

Here Raleigh goes on to complain of the manufacture and export from this country for foreign nations, declaring that unless Spain had had large quantities of our iron guns she could not have removed the brass pieces from her ports to arm the ships of 1588 with, and then goes on:—

Certainly the advantage which the English had by their bows and arrows in former times was never so great as we might now have had by our iron ordnance, if we had either kept it within the land, kept it from our enemies, or imparted it to our friends moderately. For as by the former we obtained many notable victories, and made ourselves masters of many parts of France, so by the latter we might have commanded the seas, and thereby the trade of the world itself. But we have now to our future prejudice, and how far to our prejudice I know not, forged hammers, and delivered them out of our hands, to break our own bones withal.

For the conclusion of this dispute there are five manifest causes of the upgrowing of the Hollanders and Zealanders.

The first is, the favour and assistance of Queen Elizabeth, and the King's Majesty, which the late worthy and famous Prince of Orange did always acknowledge, and in the year 1582, when I took my leave of him at Antwerp, after the return of the Earl of

Leicester into England, and Monsieur's arrival there, when he delivered me his letters to Her Majesty, he prayed me to say to the Queen from him, *sub umbra alarum tuarum protegimur;* for certainly they had withered in the bud, and sunk in the beginning of their navigation, had not Her Majesty assisted them.

The second cause was the employing of their own people in their trades and fishing, and the entertainment of strangers to serve them in their armies by land.

The third, the fidelity of the House of Nassau, and their services done them, especially of their renowned Prince Maurice, now living.

The fourth, the withdrawing of the Duke of Parma twice into France, while in his absence he recovered those strong places of Friezland, Deventer, Zutphen, &c.

And the fifth, the embarguing and confiscation of their ships in Spain, which constrained them and gave them courage to trade by force with the East and West India, and in Africa, in which they employ 180 ships and 8,700 mariners.

The success of a counsel so contrary to their wisdom that gave it, as all the wit and all the force the Spaniards have, will hardly (if ever) recover the damage thereby received.

For to repair that ruin of the Hollander's trade into both Indies, the Spaniards did not only labour the truce; but the King was content to quit the soveraignty of the United Provinces, and to acknowledge them for free States, neither holding nor depending on the crown of Spain.

But be their estate what it will, let them not deceive themselves, in believing that they can make themselves masters of the sea. For certainly the shipping of England, with the great squadron of His Majesty's Navy Royal, are able, in despight of any Prince or State in Europe, to command the great and large fields of the ocean. But as I shall never think him a lover of this land, or of the King, that shall persuade His Majesty from embracing the amity of the States of the United Provinces (for His Majesty is no less safe by them than they invincible by him). So I would wish them (because after my duty to mine own soveraign, and the love of my country, I honour them most) that they remember and consider it, that seeing their passage and re-passage lies through the British seas; that there is no port in France, from Calais to Vlushing, that can receive their ships, that many times outward, by westerly winds, and ordinarily homeward, not only from the East Indies, but from the Streights and from Spain, all southerly winds (the breezes of our climate) thrust them of necessity into the King's ports, how much His Majesty's favour doth concern them: for if (as themselves confess in their last treaty of truce with the Spaniards) they subsist by their trade, the disturbance of their trade (which England only can disturb) will also disturb their subsistence. The rest I will omit, because I can never doubt either their gratitudes or their wisdoms.

For our Newcastle trade, from which I have digressed, I refer the reader to the author of the *Trades Increase*, a gentleman to me unknown, but so far as I can judge, he hath many things very considerable in that short treatise of his; yea, both considerable and praiseworthy; and, among the rest, the advice which he hath given for the maintenance of our hoyes and carvils of Newcastle, which may serve us (besides the breeding of mariners) for good ships of war, and of exceeding advantage. And certainly I cannot but admire why the imposition of 5s. should any way dishearten them, seeing there is not one company in England upon whose trade any new payments are laid but they on whom it is laid raise profit by it.

The silk-men, if they pay His Majesty 12d. upon a yard of sattin, they not only raise that 12d., but they impose 12d. or 2s. more, upon the subject. So they do upon all they sell, of what kind soever, as all other retailers do, of what quality or profession soever. And seeing all the maritime provinces of France and Flanders, all Holland, and Zealand, Embden, Breame, &c. cannot want* our Newcastle or our Welsh coals,

* *i.e.* "Cannot do without."

the imposition cannot impoverish the transporter, but that the buyer must make payment accordingly. And if the imposition laid on those things whereof the kingdom hath no necessary use, as upon silks, velvets, gold and silver lace, cloath of gold and silver, cut works, cambricks and a world of other trumpery, doth in nothing hinder their vent here, but that they are more used than ever they were, to the utter impoverishing of the land in general, and of those popinjays that value themselves by their outsides, and by their player's coats. Certainly imposing upon coals, which other nations cannot want, can be no hindrance at all to the Newcastle men, but that they must raise it again upon the French and other nations, as those nations themselves do which fetch them from us with their own shipping.

For conclusion of this chapter, I say that it is exceeding lamentable, that for any respect in the world, seeing the preservation of the State and Monarchy doth surmount all other respects, strangers should be permitted to eat us out, by exporting and importing, both of our own commodities and those of foreign nations; for it is no wonder that we are overtopped in all the trades we have abroad and far off, seeing we have the grass cut under our feet, in our own fields and pastures at home.*

This general statement of the condition of shipping, both of war and commerce, and of the world's trade by sea, was written between 1609 and 1617, that is between forty-three and thirty-five years before the naval war between England and the United Provinces, which Raleigh foresaw but did not fear, broke out. We can see that even at the earlier date all the materials for naval war were present, and judging from what happened at the later date, we can but suppose that development in all directions ultimately conducive to naval war went on. The disputes relative to the sovereignty of the British seas, which spent themselves in the blasts and counterblasts of literary champions in Charles the First's unfortunate reign, wanted not the sanction of preparation on the sovereign's part for the war to come. Little has been done towards elucidating the share which Charles' understanding of the naval conditions of the kingdom, and the want of understanding on the part of his opposing subjects, may have had in producing the civil war, but it seems to be certain that the chief part of the money question was a naval one, and that the superior classes of ships which Charles prepared and built had a most material effect on the course of the Dutch wars. In the first war the complaints of the Dutch admirals were unceasing as to the inferiority of the Dutch ships to those of the English.

But in any case it is certain that when the first Dutch war broke out in 1652, those two elements—a great sea-borne commerce, and sea-keeping war-ships—which I have spoken of as fundamental in naval war, were abundantly present on both sides. And so far as the sea-keeping element in the war-ships went, not only had it made great advances, but owing to the neighbourhood of the two

* *An Abridgment of Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World*, &c. 1702.

states at war, and the confined theatre upon the stage of which the drama was played out, this sea-keeping quality was of less importance.

The struggle was for the mastery at sea, whether territorial conquest was or was not to follow success in this respect. As both sides had a large commerce, each was necessitated to protect its own in the first instance. What was its strength in peace was its weakness in war, and naval force was necessary to prevent the enemy from taking advantage of such weakness. On the other hand, it would be a principal object for each state, after securing the safety of her own sea-borne commerce, to fall upon, to interrupt, and destroy that of her enemy, as being the part of the nation most readily got at, and as counting double advantage in all cases of capture. The mere destruction of a merchant ship was a loss to her owning state, but no gain to the capturing state. The capture of a merchant ship was equally a loss to the owning state, but it was a similar and direct gain to the capturing state.

This great double object of preserving your own sea-borne commerce and destroying that of the enemy might be aimed at directly or indirectly. The naval force might be divided, one half to guard the State's commerce and protect it from the attacks of the enemy, the other half to break through the commerce-guard of the enemy and attack that which had been guarded. In this case there would be battles between the forces which were guarding and the forces which were attacking. There would be two wars going on side by side. The English, to put the case into a concrete and practical form, would be found attacking the Dutch force which was guarding Dutch commerce, and the Dutch would be found attacking the English force which was guarding English commerce.

But the two separate plans of war might be brought together in this way:—that the whole English force might be employed to see its commerce into what were assumed to be safe waters, free from the incursions of the enemy, and might then turn upon the whole Dutch force which had been endeavouring to do the same for its own commerce. Or the plan might be carried out *vice versâ*.

Otherwise, the objects of preserving our own commerce and destroying that of the enemy might be attained indirectly. If one power could beat the other power off the sea and into his ports—that is, considering war-ships only—it is obvious that the commerce of the conquering state would proceed and flourish, and that that of the conquered state would disappear. There might then be

simply a series of great battles at sea, in which the element of merchant ships was absent, one fleet attacking the other in the hope of mastering it merely as a means to an end; the end being a free sea for the commerce of the winner, and the power of capturing, destroying, or simply hindering the flow of the commerce of the loser.

There may be all these varieties in the struggle for the command of the sea. That struggle is a phase or condition of naval warfare, and when the command of the sea is achieved by one of the combatants a new phase sets in, as then one side will try to regain a position which it has lost, and the other side will be bent on holding the position it has gained.

We are now, however, only concerned with the previous phase, the struggle for the command of the sea; and it is nowhere so well offered for investigation and study as in the three great naval wars between the English and the Dutch, beginning in 1652, 1665, and 1672. We have seen that descents on the coast of the enemy, which formed the staple of that war by water which, I think, cannot be classed as naval war, became less and less the staple up to dates when the military seamen quoted were able to lay it down that such descents were preventible by sea, but not in any other way. We must not lose sight of this fact on entering upon the principles and practice which governed the three wars mentioned above.

A principal source of Dutch wealth was her fisheries, chiefly carried on off the north-eastern coasts of Scotland. Charles I. had successfully enforced British rights over these waters, and the non-payment of the £30,000 annually, which had been fixed by Charles as license dues, was, in fact, one of the causes of the war. In order to avoid the troubles of search and other interruptions at the hands of the English, a great part of the Dutch commerce, both outward and homeward, passed up north by the Shetland Islands. Other parts came up the Channel towards the Straits of Dover. When the negociations in London finally fell through early in July 1652, the points of attack on the Dutch at once open to England, were the great herring fleet in the Moray Firth; the homeward-bound ships passing Shetland; and the commerce up Channel. Accordingly the very first move on the part of the English was the dispatch of Blake at the head of sixty-six or sixty-eight sail to the North for the purpose of capturing or destroying the Dutch herring fleet, understood to be somewhere off the Moray Firth under convoy and guard of Dutch war-ships. The next open

action was the despatch of Sir George Ayscue to Plymouth; there to complete a fleet and to block the Channel against the homeward-bound Dutch merchant ships, and to guard our own trade.

Ayscue had not long returned from the reduction of the Island of Barbadoes, one of the many acts of reprisal which had been going on between the two nations—and which were to all intents and purposes acts of war—for a long time previous to its formal declaration. On the declaration of war, Ayscue was lying with twenty-one sail in the Downs, and the Dutch Ambassadors quitting the Thames on the final failure of the negotiations, fell in, off the Schelde, with Tromp, at the head of seventy-nine sail, and informing him of the general naval condition of England, particularly recommended to his notice the twenty-one sail that were then lying in the Downs.* Tromp (Martin, the father of Cornelius) proceeded immediately to act on the hints given, but owing to the occurrence of calms was unable to reach the Downs in time to effect a surprise, and thereupon bore away North after Blake.

Blake on his side sighted the Dutch fleet of herring busses off Buchan Ness (where the figure 1 is placed on the chart), under the guard of twelve or thirteen war-ships, carrying from twenty to thirty guns each. He detached twenty ships of his van to attack them, and after a fight, lasting three hours, about 100 of the busses were taken, two sunk, and twelve war-ships made prizes of. The remainder of the Dutch fled to their own ports. Blake kept some of the busses with him, sent three with the wounded to Inverness, but after unloading them, sent the greater part of the captured busses to Holland with the released prisoners. He then proceeded North to the neighbourhood of Foula and Fair Islands, between the Orkneys and Shetland Islands, for the purpose of carrying out the second part of his orders, the interception of the Dutch merchant ships homeward-bound from the West Indies.

There (see 2 on the chart), on the 26th of July, Tromp sighted him, and both sides prepared for battle, when a gale of wind springing up from the southward and ending at N.N.W., shattered and dispersed Tromp's fleet during the night, while Blake's ships, getting to leeward of the Shetland Islands, remained comparatively

* The authorities on which I chiefly rely for this chapter are *The Life of Cornelius Van Tromp*, published in 1697, in London; and *Columna Rostrata*, by Samuel Colliber. the second edition published in London in 1739. The second work constantly refers to the first, and both are works largely used by subsequent historians to whose accounts I have referred for clearing up discrepancies, of which there are a good many, especially as to dates. The dates I give are O. S.

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unharmed. Tromp with part of his fleet fell back to the Meuse, again followed, but hardly pursued, by Blake. The remainder of Tromp's ships, except two war-ships that were wrecked on the rocks of Shetland, and three fire-ships that appear to have foundered, got safely into the Vlie and the Texel in the beginning of September.

In the meantime, a second Dutch fleet had been fitting out in the Texel under the command of De Ruiter. By August 1st, it had grown to 15 sail and 2 fire-ships; and then later, with a force made up to 22 sail and 4 fire-ships, De Ruiter put to sea and sailed towards the Straits of Dover. The object was to pass to the southward, gathering the outward-bound trade together eastward of the Straits of Dover, and then to convoy them down Channel, and so far to the westward as to place them presumably beyond danger of attack from the British ships. De Ruiter, accordingly, got as far as Gravelines by the 10th of August, where he was joined by the convoy of 50 merchant ships and a reinforcement of 8 war-ships. He proceeded with great caution and with abundant scouts and look-outs, no doubt supposing that he might at any moment be met by the fleet of Ayscue, whom Tromp had failed to get hold of in the Downs.

On the 16th of August the Dutch had got as far as the longitude of Plymouth, but well to the southward towards the French coast; and there, sure enough, was the expected British fleet of 40 sail, 12 of them of great size, 2 being of 60, and 8 of from 36 to 40 guns, with 5 fire-ships. It is claimed for De Ruiter that he had but 30 ships of war, of which only two carried as many as 40 guns, and the rest not more than 30 each. He, too, was hampered with the convoy, now grown to 60 merchant ships.*

There was a heavy engagement, which was only put an end to by the approach of night, and it was disputed as to the side on which the victory lay. But the results remained clear enough. The fight took place somewhere about the position marked by the figure 3 on the chart. Ayscue after it, fell back to Plymouth, while De Ruiter next day, the 17th of August, was able to send his merchant ships away on their voyage under convoy of two men-of-war only, and he also followed up the English with some intention of attacking them in Plymouth Sound itself; but, having got

* *Columna Rostrata* admits the heavier British ships, but makes the forces more numerically equal, and claims that twenty merchant ships were capable of fighting, and did fight.

within a couple of miles of the Start, a gale drove him off, and caused the abandonment of the idea.

De Ruiter kept well to the westward for a week or two, having information of Blake's return to the south and of his appearance in great strength to the eastward in the Channel. He and Penn were, in fact, preying heavily on the Dutch homeward-bound merchant ships, of which the one brought in eleven and the other six, all ships of great value, and which De Ruiter had obviously proved powerless to protect. He presently made his way in safety to the Straits of Dover, and between Dunkirk and Nieuport came under the command of De Witt, who joined him with the refitted and repaired fleet of Tromp, now forty-five sail strong.

When we review the operations to this point, we can easily separate their distinguishing features. At the first moment of the war the English assumed the attacking, and the Dutch the defending, position. It may perhaps be said that this came about chiefly because, if the idea of cross-raiding upon territory had now passed away as one impracticable in this more advanced stage of naval war, the Dutch had more to defend in the way of sea-borne commerce than the English had. But something may also be said on the side of a belief that the rules of naval war, the boundaries of the probable and improbable, or even of the possible and impossible, were not traced, but were only in process of being traced.

When Blake passed north with a great fleet to do that which did not of itself require a great fleet, he left, as we have seen, Ayscue in the Downs with quite a small force—only seven war-ships—exposed to annihilation by the whole naval power of Holland. It would have been a bad beginning for the war on the English side had there been the destruction of Ayscue, and even an indecisive action afterwards between Tromp and Blake; so that it seems probable that the English took up the attitude of attack, more from a sort of eagerness to damage the Dutch, than to conduct the war to a speedy conclusion. For supposing that England had, at the outset, concentrated her whole strength and thrown it upon Tromp, she would, if then successful, have had everything else in her own hands.

But we see her only solicitous to injure the commerce and the property of Holland at sea. Ayscue, equally with Blake, left all exposed when he passed to Plymouth, leaving the Dutch fleet behind him; and all that remains pretty certain is that the idea of a Dutch raid on the Thames or on any of the numerous ports

NAVAL ACTION BETWEEN THE DUTCH, ENGLISH, AND FRENCH, ON THE 21ST AUGUST 1673.

and harbours left exposed by the departure of Blake north, and of Ayscue west, could have had hardly any place in the minds of the statesmen or commanders of the time.

The Dutch took up, just at the first moment, the rôle of an attacking force; but when the operation against the Downs squadron was abandoned, the Dutch attitude became wholly defensive. Tromp's voyage to the North was only secondarily the attack on Blake's fleet; primarily it was an attempt to protect the herring fleet and then the north-about homeward commerce. If, in process of carrying out these objects, Blake's fleet was attacked, it did not follow that it would have been so dealt with had there been no fishery and no commerce to defend. The action of De Ruiter's fleet was more obviously defensive. It centred wholly round the necessity for protecting and convoying outwards the sixty merchant ships, and for drawing together and protecting homewards the up-channel trade. Ayscue's attitude may perhaps have been in some respects defensive, as guarding a possible homeward-bound trade, but the main object was clearly the attack on the Dutch trade, which was foiled by the strength of the defending force under De Ruiter.

The conclusion of this first phase of the war left De Ruiter with the Dutch force concentrated near Gravelines, but reduced in numbers, owing to so many ships having required repair and refit after the battle with Ayscue. The English, at the same time, were concentrated about the Thames, and expecting still greater concentration by the junction of Ayscue from the west. De Witt determined, against the advice of his Council, to attack with his sixty-four sail, Blake with sixty-eight; that is to say, the Dutch intended to reverse the former case, and not only to resume the offensive, but to make the attack directly on the war force of the enemy, with the view of the ulterior advantages which a victory would give them.

The battle took place near the Kentish Knock, where the figure 4 appears on the chart, on September 28th, and the Dutch, fighting till night, were worsted and began to think of retreat. Blake's reinforcement then, by sixteen sail under Ayscue, confirmed the intention, and the Dutch retired to Helvoetsluys, but only pursued for a part of the way by the English.*

* In later chapters I shall have to consider methods of fighting and causes of victory. Here I only desire to say that the methods adopted at this epoch were not highly organized. The cut, which is taken from part of one in a Dutch life of De Ruiter, shows the confused character of the struggle.

Here we may say that the whole naval power of each nation was brought to bear on the one spot, in order to decide by one supreme effort, which was to remain in command of the sea, and which was henceforth to accept the defensive attitude that was alone available. The result of the battle produced a result which might be anticipated. The Dutch fell back on defensively protecting their commerce, and Martin Tromp in November put to sea with 73 sail guarding a convoy of 300 outward-bound merchant ships.

The English were no longer concentrated. Blake had, for the most part, separated his fleet; 20 of his ships he had detached to convoy a fleet of colliers to Newcastle; 12 others had gone to Plymouth—the historian does not say why, but probably for the double purpose of attacking the enemy's passing commerce at the entrance of the channel, and defending our own—12 more had gone up the Thames to repair and refit. When Tromp put to sea, Blake was in the Downs with only thirty-seven sail besides tenders, and he was therefore open to the destruction which Tromp, hearing of his situation, proposed to inflict on him.

The battle took place on November 20th, near where the figure 5 is placed on the chart, and the English, as might have been expected, were worsted. The fight raged with a fury which only these Anglo-Dutch battles can parallel, from one in the afternoon till night, after which Blake retired up the Thames and left Tromp for the moment master of the sea. He thereupon made some captures of merchant ships, and landed some men in Kent on a cattle-raiding expedition. The party had, however, to leave behind them the greater part of the cattle they had seized, and to fly to their boats with the loss of 100 prisoners.

But as a matter of course Tromp had been successful in his defensive business, and the whole of his immense convoy passed down and out of the channel in safety. He himself followed as far as Ile de Rhé, where, such had been the action of the English upon the Dutch trade, 250 merchant ships had congregated, waiting till a naval force strong enough to protect them up Channel should arrive and release them. Tromp stayed there seven days and then sailed with his convoy for the Channel.*

But the command of the sea, and the consequent freedom of the sea to the victorious power, is not gained by a single battle in which strategical failure has been the cause of defeat. On the

* Burchett says that it was on the voyage to the Ile de Rhé that he hoisted the traditional broom.

18th of February 1653 (old style) Tromp found Blake watching for him off Portland at the head of a fleet of 66 sail. The Dutch admit that they had 70 sail of war-ships; the English aver that they had 80; but they were necessarily much hampered by the presence of the 250 sail of merchant ships. There followed a violent and bloody fight which lasted three days, passing gradually up Channel from the spot marked with the figure 6 on the chart. There were heavy losses on both sides; ships were taken and retaken, and numbers of the merchant ships fell victims in their endeavours to get away. The Dutch confessed to a loss of 24 of these ships; the English claimed to have captured 40. The Dutch further admitted that 4 war-ships were captured and carried to Plymouth and Dover; that 3 more were sunk, and 1 blown up. The Dutch on their side claimed to have taken or sunk six or seven men-of-war, but the English only confessed to one, which, being disabled, they sank themselves. But they allowed that one ship was actually taken, though afterwards recovered.

On the evening of the third day Blake retired to the English coast, leaving Tromp to gather together his scattered forces off Dunkirk, whence they separated into their ports.

Negociations for peace were now set up, but neither side was yet ready for it, and the struggle for the command of the sea went on. The result of the war had not been such as to alter the original attitudes of the combatants. It was indeed otherwise; for whereas the attitude of attack taken up by the English had, as I have already observed, been displayed indirectly upon the enemy's commerce, and not directly on his war ships, so that the battles came about in English waters as a consequence of the Dutch offering protection to their passing convoys, it was now proposed to make a direct attack on the enemy on his own coasts.

Tromp, renewing the bitter complaints as to the inferiority of the Dutch ships, was directed notwithstanding, to convoy 200 merchant ships, bound for France and Spain, to the north of Scotland, and to convoy back the homeward trade assembled in those waters.

Dean and Monk, with Penn and Lawson, being at the head of a fleet which, according to the Dutch, numbered 105 sail, including 26 new frigates, and carrying 2,840 guns, manned by 16,269 men, heard of these orders, and proposed to attack Tromp, or at least, to prevent his getting away from the Texel without a battle. But he was beforehand with them. He got clear away; took his

convoy safe, and though he missed the homeward trade, those ships, to the number of 300, arrived safely in their ports without seeing an enemy. This was towards the end of May 1653.

But Tromp had run great risks. While he was in the Texel with the major part of his fleet, a portion was also in Zealand, in the Maas or the Schelde. Dean and Monk's design was to prevent the junction, but though they were late for that purpose they were, on May 15th, actually within five miles of Tromp and his convoy without seeing them. The English captured or destroyed a good many fishing and other vessels on the coast, and even went so far as to land a few men, but with no result. They claimed, chiefly, to have kept the whole coast in a state of alarm.

When Tromp returned, he was reinforced by seventeen sail and a fire-ship, and hearing that a squadron of eight sail and eight merchant ships was in the Downs (it was the squadron of Commodore Bodley from the Mediterranean), it was determined to surround and attack them there, Tromp approaching from the northward and De Witt from the southward. Monk and Dean were at this time in Yarmouth Roads, at the head of the bulk of the English fleet. Bodley's squadron had news of the Dutch approach, and got way into the Thames; Monk had also news, and put to sea after Tromp. The Dutch failing in their primary object, captured a few merchant ships which had got in shore under cover of the forts of Dover and Deal; but though fire was exchanged between the forts and the ships, that was more by way of bravado and insult than of systematic attack, for ships which got close under Dover Castle escaped capture.

Monk and Dean, at the head of some ninety-five sail and five fire-ships, came up with Tromp, now commanding some ninety-eight sail and six fire-ships, in the neighbourhood of Nieuport, and a general action ensued, beginning about 11 A.M. on June 3rd, and lasting till night. Dean was killed during the first day's battle. The fight was renewed next day, June 4th, and the Dutch, thoroughly beaten in the end, retired behind the shoals between Ostend and Sluis, then called the Wielings. The whereabouts of the action is shown by the figure 7 on the chart.

It was after this battle that Vice-Admiral De Witt made his celebrated declaration before the Assembly of the States General:—"Why should I keep any longer silence? I am here before my sovereigns, and am free to speak; and I can say that the English are at present masters both of us and of the seas."

These operations, first the appearance of the English on the

Dutch coasts, and now the appearance of the Dutch on the English coasts, were clearly parts of a direct contest for the command of the sea, resulting in its being left, at least for a time, in the hands of the English. The effect of such command was, in the words of the Dutch historian, that the English "held the coasts of Holland as 'twere besieged, after they had stopt up (by blockade) the mouth of the Texel, which obliged the States, to prevent any descent from them, to post some troops on the isles and on the coasts. During which distress, three ships returning from the East Indies richly laden, unfortunately fell into the hands of the English, as did likewise two others coming from Portugal, and three more from Swedeland, whereof two were burnt and the rest taken. And towards the Straits of Callis Captain Wight likewise was taken, with four ships laden with salt." *

But the Dutch, though conquered, were not subdued, and were not yet prepared to wholly abandon the struggle for the command of the sea. They moved heaven and earth to re-fit and re-complete their fleet; but the trouble was that, as the 80 or 90 sail under Tromp were in the Southern Zealand ports, and the 27 sail under De Witt were in the Texel to the northward, while the great, and so far victorious, English fleet lay between and ready to fall on that part of the Dutch force which first put to sea, there was much doubt whether the Dutch could ever draw together in sufficient force at the same time and place to face the enemy.

Nevertheless Tromp put to sea on July 27th with his 80 odd ships, with the intention of bringing on a very partial action with the 106 sail under Monk, Penn, and Lawson. The hostile fleets sighted each other off Egmond, twenty miles south of the Texel, on the 29th July, and Tromp stood away to W.S.W. to draw the English after him and to free De Witt. The engagement was more general than Tromp intended, but when night put a pause to the fighting, he wrote not altogether hopelessly of the ultimate result, if only the squadron under De Witt could get out and join him.

The engagement was very partially renewed on the morning of the 30th of July, on account of the heavy weather; but Tromp's strategy had succeeded so well that De Witt had crawled out of the Texel about midnight on the night before, and Tromp began to

* *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 131. *Columna Rostrata* says the English took twenty rich ships at the mouth of the Texel, and then the Baltic and the East India ships dared not sail.

see his ships approaching about noon, and by 5 in the afternoon the two fleets had formed a junction and turned to seek the enemy once more.

There was a tremendous encounter on the 1st August near about where the figure 8 is placed on the chart, which lasted all day, and the veteran leader, Tromp, being killed, fortune turned finally and decidedly against the Dutch, and they made for the shelter of their ports. They acknowledged to a loss of 9 ships, taken or burnt, of 500 men killed and 700 wounded. But the English claimed that the Dutch loss was between 20 and 30 men-of-war, burnt or sunk, and between 5,000 and 6,000 men; while admitting their own loss to be two ships burnt, 400 men killed or drowned, and 700 wounded; no less than 8 captains being amongst the former, and 5 amongst the latter. But the English made no captures, and were themselves not in a condition to keep the sea.

As a consequence of the undoubted fact that it became necessary for the English to return to their own ports, the Dutch claimed the accomplishment of their design to free their ports from blockade, and next month De Witt, now in supreme command, proved his case by escorting a considerable convoy towards the Sound, and conducting back a similarly large fleet of merchant ships into the Texel towards the end of October. But the Dutch carried bravado rather too far; for, determining to keep outside their ports, their fleet was met at anchor off the coast by a furious three days' gale, which shattered the Dutch and forced the English into their harbours, so that all thought of a further struggle was abandoned.

Then too, political necessities caused Cromwell to listen more favourably to the Dutch proposals for peace; and a final treaty was signed in April 1654. The Dutch got easier terms than had before been entertained. They were not now called on to admit the right of search; to open free trade in the Schelde, to limit the number of their war-ships, or to renew the license dues for their fishery; but they agreed to admit the English dominion ot the seas, that is, of the British seas, by striking to the English flag; to accept the Parliament's Navigation Act, and to promise other reparations and acts which had not to do with the naval aspect of the question.

The English claimed, as the result of this war, which had lasted just one year and eleven months, that they had been victorious in five general actions, and had made 1,700 prizes valued at £6,000,000

sterling; while they did not allow that Holland had made one quarter of their captures, either in number or value.

But what concerns us here is not so much the facts of the war as the principles which underlay the action taken, and the practical issues which such principles bring to light.

In the first place, the war was wholly naval, wholly on the water, and yet brought Holland to her knees almost as effectually as an invasion could have done; and yet at nothing like the cost to the English, either in blood or treasure, which an invasion would have entailed. This is strikingly brought to mind by recalling that the value of the captures made in two years or so (for they had begun before war was formally declared) came to about twice the whole revenue of the country for the same period.

Then we see that it was probably commerce which kept it as a naval war, and that in the early stages, commerce, its protection over defined trade routes, and its attack at suitable points, governed almost absolutely the movements of the fleets of both nations. But as the war went on, and doubtless, we may say, became more understood, we have greater concentrations of force and more direct attempts to master the force. Because the Dutch trade must be mainly conducted past the British coasts, the English fleets are found there, and the battles take place there. But as the struggle develops and, I believe we may say, is better comprehended, the attack by the power which has slowly been gaining, is made indirectly on commerce by successful direct attacks upon the enemy's fleet near his own coasts.

The vast concentrations of naval force merely for naval operations were not to be found in previous wars. They were a feature of all the Dutch wars, but in later wars were more the exception than the rule. The broad reasons for such concentrations have been shown with sufficient clearness by the course of the narrative, but there are some inner causes which will require future treatment. For the present we shall probably do well to consider them as arising directly from the necessities of a struggle for the command of the sea, and to observe how very small a share the attack upon territory occupies while this great struggle is going on.

CHAPTER III.

The Struggle for the Command of the Sea—(*continued*).

The power which is weakest finds it impossible to defend commerce and struggle for the command of the sea at the same time.—On the opening of the second war the Dutch give up the defence of commerce, and prohibit it.—The attack on both sides is concentrated and direct upon the naval force.—When command of the sea becomes at all secure, attacks on shipping in harbours follow, as at the Vlie, and in the Thames and Medway; and troops for landing are embarked.

In the first Dutch war, the leading events of which were sketched in my last chapter, we had an excellent example of the struggle for the command of the sea, carried on between two maritime powers of not very unequal naval force, but one of which, Holland, appeared to be much weaker on the sea because of her great dependence on sea-borne commerce, and the necessity she was under of protecting it.

This defensive attitude, which she must latterly have known to be a weak one, was forced upon her in a war carried on at sea, by the necessities of her national life, unless she were possessed of sufficient naval force to have defended her commerce by one part of it, and to have directly attacked the forces of her enemy with the other part of it. But not having such a sufficiency of naval force, or at any rate acting as though she had not, she suffered heavily in the loss of ships and cargoes, and disproportionately with the English loss in that way. I have not had means of comparing the actual amount of the sea-borne commerce of Holland and of Great Britain during the period of the war, but I think we may infer from its transactions, that Great Britain had not nearly so much property on the water as Holland had, and was con-

sequently not nearly so much hampered by the necessity of protecting it as Holland was, and that we may fairly argue that the greater success on our side was as much due to the weakness of Holland's naval position, on account of her greater commerce, as it was to our greater naval force.

At least we may say of the first Dutch war, that it was, on a very extended scale, that sort of "bare action at sea," of which we have seen Sir William Monson speak somewhat slightingly at an earlier date. Yet the Dutch themselves admitted that they were brought to greater straits by this twenty-three months of sea war than by the eighty years of land war which they carried on against the Crown of Spain.* But we shall see presently that just as the Spanish contest taught us what the nature of naval war really was, and started us, as it were, on the new footing when we came to take up a new war, so this first Dutch war confirmed the belief, hinted at by Monson and Raleigh, that a great struggle may begin and end on the sea; and went a step further in establishing rules of naval warfare.

I am not concerned in this treatise to go much into the causes of the wars I use for illustrations, and I shall pass over those which led to the second Dutch war. It was the practice in those days to begin early in the way of what men were pleased to call reprisals; and long before the formal declaration of war by the Dutch in January, and by the English in March 1665,† there had been covert attacks going on between the two nations, both on territory and shipping. In the matter of shipping, the most notable "reprisal" was the attack by Sir T. Allen, with eight or nine men-of-war on some forty Dutch merchant ships off Cadiz, which were under convoy of four war-ships commanded by Commodore Brackel; several merchant ships were taken or sunk, and the Dutch commodore was killed. This was on the 29th December 1664, consequently before the actual declaration of war. A great seizure was also made of 130 merchant ships from Bordeaux, but many of them were reclaimed by France and released as not being good prize.

But this indication of how the war would run was sufficient, with other causes, to determine the Dutch in making a great change in their method of carrying it on. They had laid to heart the lesson of the former war, and now saw the impossibility of

* *Columna Rostrata*, p. 139.

† *Columna Rostrata* says February, but the *Life of Cornelius Tromp* says March 14/4.

continuing the struggle for the command of the sea, which was to be done by means of attack, and attempting to protect a great commerce, which was a defensive operation, at the same time. The case was this with them. If they could muster strength enough to make a direct attack on the British fleet, then that fleet could not afford to separate heavy detachments from it for the purpose of attacking commerce, or in fact for any other purpose, the danger of such detachments having been clearly shown by the battle of November 29th, 1653, between Blake and Tromp. They had no hopes of producing a force considerable enough to make this attack, if part of it was to be dissipated in defensive duties which would not be required to any extent if the general naval forces of the British could be overcome, and the command of the sea in the hands of the Dutch thereby established. There was another thing to be said. The men who were employed in carrying on a commerce certain to disappear if it could not be protected, would be uselessly employed in the Mercantile Marine if the War Marine lacked power to maintain its superiority at sea. They were at the same time much wanted to complete the complement of the numbers of ships which must be fitted out if the war was to be conducted with any hopes of success. The cessation of commerce and trade for a time might be a heavy blow to the United Provinces, but at least the enemy was not directly benefited as he would be if, as in the last war, he made such very numerous and rich captures at sea. If the States began the war by accepting and facing a loss, it at least left their hands more free to engage in the direct struggle for victory.

This reasoning determined the action of the States General. An ordinance was issued absolutely "prohibiting all subjects of the United Provinces to stir out of their ports upon pain of confiscation of their ships and merchandises." They likewise ordered that the fisheries of all kinds should be put a stop to, and the more certainly to secure obedience, they forbade the importation of herrings and other salt fish.*

This act was no doubt an admission of inferiority, but not submission to the superior force.

In my first chapter I drew attention to the prohibition of the West Indian commerce for one year by the King of Spain. Anticipating, as I shall constantly do for the sake of illustrating principles, I here note how Prussia, in 1870, prohibited her merchant

* *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 261. *Columna Rostrata*, p. 213.

ships all over the world from putting to sea, lest they should fall into the hands of France. In these two cases, the nations giving up their sea commerce for the time were simply doing what they could not help. Neither Spain nor Prussia had the power to protect their commerce, and they had the choice of two evils when the choice was plain. It was better that their commerce should suffer a pause than that it should simply fall into the hands of the enemy and enrich him.

The case was different with Holland. She dropped her commerce for a time, not because she could not hope to protect it, but because she could not make a struggle for the command of the sea, and protect her commerce at the same time. She was like a tigress pausing in her spring and gathering all her forces together to make it with effect.

But though commerce was thus strictly prohibited, there were a large number of Dutch ships on their way home when the order was given, and I think, too, that it is not impossible that the order was not completely obeyed. The Government having, by the ordinance, shaken themselves clear, as it were, from all responsibility in the protection of merchant ships, was the less likely to have interfered with the more venturous of the merchants. Thus, though in this war the protection of commerce ceases to occupy the prominent place it took up in the first war, and the Dutch fleets no longer hamper themselves with great strings of vessels neither very able nor very willing to offer defence, yet commerce still remains to some extent an object of attack to the English, and is, in cases, defended by the Dutch war-ships.

But that the English were somewhat of the same mind as the Dutch may be inferred from Pepys' note of January 15th, 1664–5. He records Sir G. Ayscue declaring in Council, that "the war and trade could not be supported together."*

The English, in consequence of false information respecting the Dutch movements, hurried their fleet to sea while still short of stores, provisions, and men. James, Duke of York, having Sir William Penn on board him as his Captain of the Fleet, with Prince Rupert and the Earl of Sandwich as his vice and rear-admirals, appeared off the Texel on the 24th April. His fleet consisted of 109 "men-of-war and frigates," and 28 fire-ships and ketches, manned by 21,000 men. Immediate captures followed of several merchant ships, which the Dutch made no effort to

* Quoted in G. Penn's *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 312.

prevent. Even had the Dutch been ready for sea, which they were not, they were really paralysed by the position of the English fleet. It was understood in England that James had "used all possible means to provoke the Dutch to a battle,"* but this was impossible, because of the divided state of the Dutch fleet, and the concentrated state of the English fleet. Thirty-one of the Dutch were in Zealand in the Maas and the Schelde, the remainder were in Holland and Friesland, in the Texel and the Vlie. The English fleet off the Texel was lying across them all, and threatening any that put to sea with destruction.

But what the strategy of the English prevented, the conditions of weather and the incomplete state of the ships allowed. A heavy gale drove the whole of the English forces off the coast, and the damages received, as well as the necessity of completing the fleet compelled a return to an anchorage off Harwich, where the store-ships and victuallers made their appearance.

Thus left free, the Zealand part of the fleet put to sea and formed a junction with the Holland and Friesland parts from the Vlie and the Texel, on May 12th. The fleet so assembled, consisted of 103 "men-of-war," 7 yachts, 11 fire-ships, and 12 galliots, carrying 4,869 guns, and manned with 21,631 men.† The whole were under the command of Admiral Opdam, and were gathered into seven squadrons, each under its admiral. They made sail across the North Sea to seek the English fleet in its own waters.

The Dutch made a great prize as they neared our shores, capturing nine rich Hamburgh ships, valued at between £200,000 and £300,000, which were under convoy of but one frigate of forty-four guns.‡

James, in his anchorage off Harwich, still half manned and busy with his victuallers and store-ships, heard of the sailing of the Dutch and of their capture of the Hamburgh ships. Fearing to be caught amongst the shoals about Harwich, and to be thereby powerless to avert the mischief which might ensue, James proceeded, with his victuallers and store-ships, to the more open anchorage of Sole, or Southwold, Bay. Here he brought up on June 1st in the early morning, about five miles off shore. The storing and victualling went on, and also by perhaps a happy fortune, the supply of men arrived in the nick of time.§ The

* *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 325.
† *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 268.
‡ The *Good Hope*. *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 326.
§ *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 323.

same afternoon the Dutch were seen eighteen miles E.S.E. The victuallers were sent to Harwich, and the fleet shifted further out, want of wind compelling a second anchorage, which was finally quitted at 10 o'clock at night. All next day, June 2nd,* the fleets manœuvred in sight of each other, but it was not till about half-past three on the morning of June 3rd that fire was opened.

The very remarkable features of the battle that ensued will be dealt with in their proper place later on. I can here only state the results. The fleets met off Lowestoft, and the battle lasted the whole day, turning, as night approached, into a retreat by the Dutch and a pursuit by the English. During the chase many prizes were taken by the English, but the pursuit was slackened in the night by the mysterious interference of one of the Duke's suite while he slept; and though the chase was continued during daylight of the 4th, the Dutch were able to anchor amongst the shoals off the Texel, where the English dared not follow for want of knowledge of the locality, without further molestation. James saw the Hollanders pass into the Texel, and then returned to England to repair and refit.

The English in this battle claimed to have captured eighteen sail of the Dutch—though some were recovered by them—to have sunk fourteen, and to have burnt others. The Dutch allowed that nine ships were taken, one blown up,† seven or eight burnt. The English lost the Earl of Marlborough and Admiral Sampson killed, and Lawson mortally wounded; and 250 others killed, with 340 wounded; and the Dutch carried off a 46-gun ship, the *Charity*.

In this first phase of the war we have the complete abandonment of every other idea but a direct and equal struggle for the command of the sea. The English, by their promptitude in getting to sea, were able to repeat the strategy of the close of the former war, and by placing themselves in force off the Texel, they lay between the Zealand and Holland branches of the fleet, and prevented their junction. We know not how things might have progressed had the weather permitted the Duke of York to maintain the position; nor can we say what might have taken place had the Dutch been able to put to sea earlier, and to have followed up the English with greater speed than they did, so as to have attacked them in their

* There is often the difficulty of one day in the dates, the civil day beginning at midnight and the nautical day at noon; so that one writer may call the forenoon of a day June 2nd and another June 3rd, according as he used civil or nautical time.

† Admiral Opdam's ship, with the admiral in her. The locality of the battle is shown by the figure 1 in the chart.

disordered state. As it was, we simply see complete concentration of the naval power of each nation, with a clear conviction on both sides that until one or other fleet has proved victorious, the war can fall into no other phases.

Master of the sea for the time, but apparently not so wholly recovered, or ready, as to be able to transfer the war to the Dutch coast and keep it there, the Earl of Sandwich, now at the head of the English fleet, proceeded to undertake two enterprizes which the victory had left him free to do. In the matter of the reprisals before the war actually began, Sir Robert Holms had attacked and reduced several settlements of the Dutch on the West African coast, had then passed over to New Netherlands (now New York), and had brought that province into subjection. But De Ruiter had followed on his heels, re-capturing to a great extent after him, and making many captures of English merchant ships in the West Indies.

From this expedition De Ruiter was now returning round the North of Scotland, and Sandwich, hearing of it, made a push towards the Dutch coast to intercept him, but failed; for De Ruiter, by keeping far to the northward, and touching at Bergen, in Norway, got safe into the Ems. This was the first attempt which Sandwich was free to make in overwhelming force, so that had he succeeded in meeting De Ruiter's small squadron,* he would have made short work of it; for he had with him some seventy sail.† The second attempt was what the Dutch became open to so soon as they had been forced into their own harbours.

Sandwich got news that some seventy sail of Dutch merchant ships, including the Turkey fleet and ten East India ships, had taken refuge at Bergen. Still being free from fear of molestation by a superior fleet, he detached Sir John Tiddiman with twelve or fourteen men-of-war and three fire-ships to attack them. But the Dutch had made good use of the time at their disposal to prepare a defence, and partly by mooring the heaviest ships so as to keep their guns bearing, and partly by landing guns and erecting temporary works, they had made their position a very strong one. So that Tiddiman's attack, much hindered as it was by the wind, which kept him from advancing and blinded him with smoke, was a complete failure.

Sandwich does not appear to have made any attempt to keep permanently at sea on the Dutch coast. The idea of a strict and

* De Ruiter had originally twelve sail with him. *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 253.

† *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 361.

continued blockade of the Dutch ports must either have been absent from the minds of the commanders, or else the ships in their interior economies and arrangements were still unable to keep the sea for any continuance.* Perhaps both causes operated. At a later date the "great ships" were still of a tender sort, not fit to be trusted at sea in the winter months, both from their tendency to labour and leak in a sea-way, and also from their unhandiness and the consequent dangers they ran of lee shores and other dangers of navigation. But again, it seems certain that commercial blockade was not understood. If the Dutch ports could be watched closely it was certain there were no better positions for making sure of the homeward trade. Yet it seems that when Sandwich detached Tiddiman to operate against the ships in Bergen, he himself took the rest of the fleet to the Shetland Islands, and was there watching for the returning Dutch ships on the 8th of August.†

The Dutch ports were in this way left open, and their fleets left free to reassemble and combine. This was done, and on information of the divided state of the English, the Hollanders sailed towards Bergen in hopes of falling on Tiddiman's squadron. Seeing no signs of him, they took the Bergen merchant fleet under convoy about the end of August, hoping to bring the 70 ships safe into their ports. But here the great enemy of naval operations, the wind, put itself *en évidence*, and scattered both merchant fleet and war ships. Sandwich was back again now, in the middle of the North Sea, and on the 5th September was 90 miles NNW from the Texel, having been for the two previous days picking up largely amongst the scattered Dutch war, and merchant, ships. He had then taken four men-of-war of 40 to 54 guns each, three East Indiamen, and seven other merchant ships. Several other great prizes fell into the hands of the English at the same time, but both fleets appear to have been a good deal broken up and detached, the Dutch not having recovered their dispersion, and

* Pepys records Sir Wm. Coventry as "disliking our staying with the fleet on the Dutch coast, believing that the Dutch will come out in fourteen days, and then we with our unready fleet, by reason of some of the ships being maimed, shall be in a bad condition to fight them on their own coast." (July 30, 1666). *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 412.

† It is difficult to say now, how much the contention between the soldier and the sailor element in our fleets at this time had to do with the apparent want of system. Penn's influence was very great, but the military fleet commanders, such as Monk and Sandwich, were bitterly jealous of him, and may—as Monk certainly did—have scorned the sailor's advice.

the English devoting themselves to prize-making, so that no general action took place.

Sandwich, with but 18 sail about him, and his prizes, got back to Sole Bay on the 11th of September, while most part of the Dutch sought refuge in Goree a few days later, and the scattered squadrons of the English soon found their way home also.

In England everything was now disorganised, as the plague was at its worst all through the months of August and September. The war ships returned into port, and there was no heart to refit them for fresh operations. It was otherwise with the Dutch. Notwithstanding further damages from wind, they managed to get a fleet of 90 sail to sea on the 1st of October, with the intention of falling in great force on the detached squadrons which they hoped to find at anchor in Sole Bay, off Harwich, in the Downs, or at the mouth of the Thames. On the 5th, the Dutch appeared off Yarmouth and Lowestoft, but neither there nor at Sole Bay were there any war ships to be seen. In fact, no traffic of any kind appears to have been stirring, for they seem to have captured only one small vessel. While they were thus to the northward, however, and now working to the southward with light winds, 16 men-of-war lying off Harwich got news of their presence, and instantly weighed and ran up the Thames, where they were seen by the Dutch on the 7th, but too far off to be got at. At the mouth of the Thames the Dutch anchored for the night, and next morning made for the Downs, in hopes of surprising some vessels said to be there. But calms and light winds frustrated their intentions, and gave the ships time to escape. From their anchorage at the mouth of the Thames, they reconnoitred and sounded higher up, and might possibly have concerted some other design in the apparent total absence of anything to oppose them. But their crews became terribly and unaccountably sickly, and the sickness showed every tendency of increase. The position was also that there was nothing to be done. All possible prizes were in the harbours and up the rivers; there was nothing going in and nothing coming, or likely to come, out. A determination was arrived at to break up the fleet and send it home. But a small group of six light frigates and four galliots were left to watch the mouth of the Thames for three days, simply to notify to any Dutch war ships arriving, that the fleet had retired. A squadron of 18 of the healthiest ships under Admiral Sweers was also told off to keep the sea for three weeks longer, and to cruise off the Dogger Bank, as well to offer convoy to any homeward-bound Dutch

merchant ships coming north about, as to lie across the English trade to Hamburgh and the Baltic, and to attack it. But nothing noticeable came of the proceeding, and the war ceased for the winter months.

The only point of principle which it here seems necessary to take note of, is the small result to either side of a mere temporary command of the sea. The greatest successes of the English against merchant ships were when the war fleets were all but in sight of one another; the greatest successes of the Dutch in the same way were just before the battle of Lowestoft. When the English by their promptitude obliged the Dutch to remain in port, little or nothing came of it. When the English, broken up and disheartened by the Plague, left the sea free to the Dutch, they themselves sum up the result as follows: "The Dutch fleet then did nothing that expedition but cause some alarms upon the coast of England, and all the honour they gained by it was only that of having offered battle to the English fleet whilst they kept themselves within their harbours, as being debarred by a raging and pestilent distemper from accepting it, and having interrupted the commerce of the English merchants, by keeping the mouth of the Thames blocked up for about sixteen days together"* It would appear, so far, as if something more than mere temporary command of the sea is required before full advantage can be taken of it.

Early in 1666, a new element was introduced into the war by the alliance of France with Holland, the French declaration of war against England, and her threatened junction of a fleet of thirty men-of-war with the Dutch.† Further difficulties for England developed in the declaration of war against her by Denmark and Brandenberg. This French fleet put to sea from Toulon on the 9th January 1666, and was under the command of the Duke of Beaufort, but it did not get as far as Rochelle till near the end of August; it was at Dieppe on the 14th of September, but made no further effort to join the Dutch, and not finding them there, it returned to Brest and nothing more was heard by sea of the French alliance with Holland.

But when the English fleet was ready for sea, towards the end of May, the French fleet, which had been joined by six Hollanders

* *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 324.

† O. Troude, *Battailles Navales de France*, vol. i., p. 107, makes the force 13 ships of from 56 to 84 guns; 16 of from 36 to 42 guns; 3 of 26 and 28 guns, and a small vessel. This was a very heavy force for the time.

with fire-ships and ketches, was still a threat, and to meet it Prince Rupert was detached to the Isle of Wight, probably to St. Helens, to bar the passage and prevent the junction with the Dutch.

The English fleet put to sea towards the end of May, and before Prince Rupert was detached, it consisted of 81 men-of-war, mounting 4,460 guns, and manned by 21,085 men. Prince Rupert's detachment left it about 61 sail in strength.

The Dutch having put to sea about the 21st of May with a fleet of 96 sail, carrying 4,716 guns and 20,642 men, had anchored before the 1st of June between Dunkirk and the North Foreland, and there Monk, now Duke of Albemarle, proposed to attack them with only two out of the three divisions of his fleet.

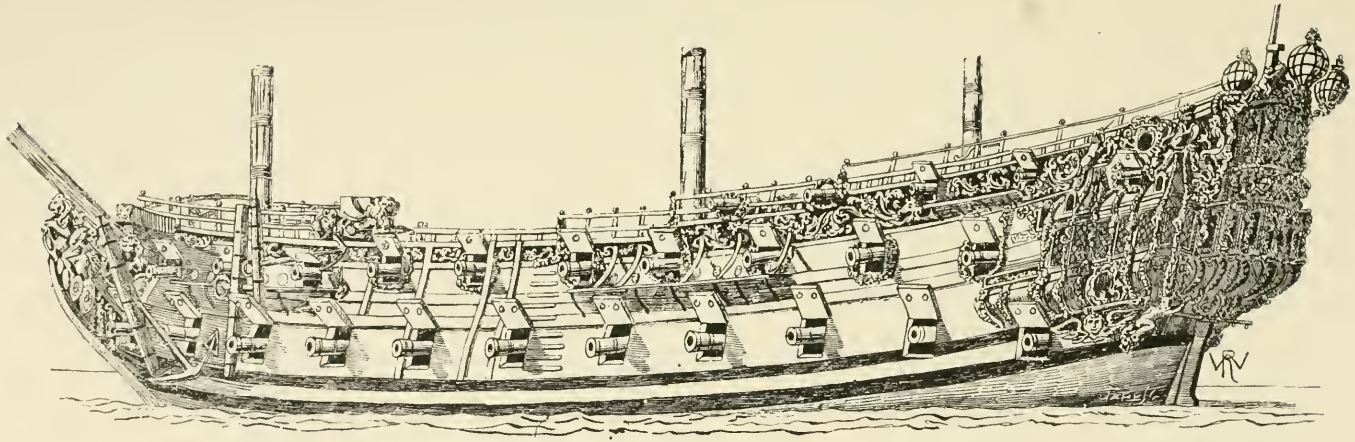
It was blowing hard when the English sighted the Dutch, and the naval officers were strongly against an attack, not only because of the inferiority of force, but because in such a stormy wind, they being to windward, they were unable to use the lower deck guns —the heaviest tier. But Monk overbore all opposition to his will, and ran down upon the Dutch without preserving that order which was becoming recognized as a necessity in a sea-fight. The result was a four days' combat of the severest and bloodiest character. The English were throughout the attacking force, but a large balance of victory remained in the enemy's hands.* The first day's battle ended at 10 o'clock at night, when the English claimed to have burnt two Dutch ships, but to have lost three by capture, and to have had Vice-Admiral Sir William Berkeley killed. The night was spent in preparing for the next day's battle, when the Dutch lost one or two ships burnt, and Vice-Admiral Van der Hulst killed. Nevertheless, the Dutch having received a reinforcement,† Albemarle began to fall back to have the support of Prince Rupert, who was coming to his assistance. The retreat was made in good order, but Monk was obliged to burn certain disabled ships, to prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. The Dutch followed, but not closely.

On the third day, June 3rd, the *Royal Prince*, bearing the flag of Sir George Ayscue, the largest and heaviest ship in the English fleet, ran on the Galloper shoal, and being threatened by fire-ships, surrendered.‡ The ship was burnt, and the crew, including the admiral, made prisoners.

* The site of the first day's battle is shown by the figure 2 on the chart.

† "Sixteen great ships." *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 389.

‡ The *Royal Prince* was the work of Phineas Pett. She was launched at Woolwich in 1610 in the presence of King James the Queen, Prince of Wales, Duke of York,



THE "ROYAL PRINCE."

Prince Rupert had been warned to quit St. Helens and rejoin the main fleet, and it was known that he had sailed on the afternoon of the 1st. He appeared on the evening of the 3rd, and joining Albemarle, the battle was renewed till night. Next morning, the fourth day of the fight, the Dutch were seen a long way off, and the English making sail for them, the battle was renewed at 8 A.M. and lasted till 7 P.M., when a fog put a stop, and as it turned out a final stop, to the combat.

Each fleet returned to its own harbours; ours was in a terrible plight. "The sad spectacle," says Evelyn; "more than half that gallant bulwark of the kingdom miserably shattered; hardly a vessel entire, but appearing so many wrecks and hulls, so cruelly had the Dutch mangled us."* We lost nine or ten ships, beside the *Royal Prince*; had nearly 600 men killed, 1,100 wounded, and 2,000 prisoners. The Dutch admitted that they had lost from four to six men-of-war.

The Dutch had so far gained a victory, but they were under the impression not only that the victory was more complete, but that its effects were more permanent and far reaching than they really were. In their mistaken view they not only hurried their fleet of sixty sail out of the Texel on the 25th of June, but prepared with it a fleet of transports carrying troops, in order to made a descent on our coasts, having by their victory, as they supposed, secured themselves from interruption at sea. With this fleet, considerably reinforced from other ports, they appeared at the mouth of the Thames. But at the Nore, to their disappointed astonishment, lay a new English fleet computed at eighty-eight sail, with fire-ships and ketches. These ships were the repaired and refitted remains of the beaten fleet, with additions, all collected and approaching completion, by the great exertions of Sir William Penn, now one of the Commissioners of the navy.

The Dutch hopes were entirely frustrated by this unexpected sight, and they found themselves reduced to carrying out the simple operation of blocking the Thames, which they did till the 19th or 20th of July, when the English fleet put to sea after them.† This

and other royal and noble personages. She was 114 feet long, 44 feet broad, and was pierced for 64 guns, though carrying but 55. She was estimated to measure 1,200 tons. The actual armament was, two 30-prs., six 24-prs., twelve 18-prs., eighteen 9-prs., thirteen 6-prs., and four "port-pieces." See Charnock's *History of Marine Architecture*, vol. ii., *passim*. The cut is taken from his plate.

* *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., 395.

† The reasons given by the Dutch author for making no attack are rather confused and obscure. "The English fleet, who had advice of the setting out of the Holland

latter was now composed of eighty-nine men-of-war, with eighteen to twenty fire-ships; and the Dutch fleet was of the same force.

The English came up with the Dutch at a point N.E. by E. of the North Foreland on the 25th of July, and a desperate battle of the usual type ensued.* Prince Rupert and Albemarle held a joint command (in one ship) of the Red Squadron, while Sir Thomas Allen, commanded the White, and Sir Jeremiah Smith the Blue. The Dutch were under the command of De Ruiter. The fight began about noon and continued all day, the Dutch retreating towards their own coast, and the English following. The pursuit was maintained all night and through the next day, with very light winds. The Dutch ultimately found shelter behind the shoals which lie off Ostend, then called the Wielings; while the English, fearing the dangers of shoal water, anchored to the northward, in the Schoonevelde, watching them. The Dutch necessarily admitted the English victory; the usual counter-claims made the English lose either one ship or four ships, and the English claimed that the Dutch had lost twenty ships, sunk or burnt, and 7,000 men killed and wounded.

The Dutch, unable to renew the battle, betook themselves to repairing their losses and refitting. The English, thus free, "passed along the whole coast of Holland, taking ships at the very mouths of the harbours, and causing a hot alarm wherever they appeared."† On arriving near the Vlie, they heard that a great fleet of merchant ships was lying in an exposed position in that river, and also that there were certain unprotected magazines of stores on the Islands of Vlie and Schelling. It was determined to make an attack, and Sir Robert Holms, at the head of nine frigates, five fire-ships, and seven ketches was despatched for the purpose. He anchored at the mouth of the Vlie on the 8th of August, and sending in a ketch to reconnoitre, received from her the intelligence that there were about 200 merchant ships thus open to him. He proposed to attack the ships first, and sent the *Pembroke*—the frigate which drew least water of any in his squadron—with five fire-ships, to burn the merchant fleet. Several ships were destroyed in this

fleet, knew so well how to secure themselves of all the posts where any descent could be made, by placing there both horse and foot, that they quite broke all the designs of the Hollanders, who saw themselves thereby disabled to attempt anything for want of good sounders." *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 374.

* The locality is marked by the figure 3 on the chart. It was often the case that the sound of the guns in these great battles were heard in London, and it was so on this occasion. See *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 409.

† *Columna Rostrata*, p. 182.

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way, and the rest cut their cables and ran into shoal water. Thereupon Holms sent in twenty pinnaces, which followed up the unfortunate merchant vessels and burnt all of them except three or four privateers, one trader to Guinea, and a few of the Baltic traders.

Having thus finished with the ships, Sir Robert despatched two frigates and some ketches to make a descent on the Island of Vlie. But this proved a failure in consequence of the rain rendering the fire-arms useless.

There was better success on the island of Schelling, where the men, divided into eleven companies, landed and laid the town of Brandaries, containing 600 or 700 houses, in ashes. Sir Robert had thoughts of repeating the operation on other towns, but having to wait twenty-four hours for tide to suit the time, and fearing a change of wind, he rejoined the main fleet, which, after capturing twelve or fourteen more Dutch merchantmen, returned home. It was supposed that the value of the ships and cargoes destroyed in the Vlie came to more than £1,100,000, without counting the damage done on shore. If we are at all justified in drawing conclusions as to what this sum meant in that age, by comparing it with the public revenue then, and assuming a proportionate sum now, the result is rather startling. The British revenue then was a million and a half; it is now ninety millions. If we can suppose £66,000,000 worth of our shipping property being now destroyed at one *coup*, we may perhaps realize what the loss meant to the Dutch in 1666.

But it is important to recall the conditions under which such attack and destruction became possible. The Dutch fleets had been beaten into their ports in such condition that for the time they dared not present themselves at sea. The English fleet was in full control, for the time, of the Dutch waters off the coast. It was in a position to entirely prevent Sir Robert Holms' operations from being interfered with by any force arriving over sea. The English force detached from the main fleet was a very small one, and only a single ship, and that the lightest of the nine frigates, was actually engaged. Quite conceivably, the presence of only a couple of Dutch frigates in the Vlie would have sufficed to preserve this vast property in safety.*

* "I had an opportunity of much talk with Sir W. Penn to-day (he being newly come from the fleet)," writes Pepys, on August 22nd, 1666, "and he do much undervalue the honour that is given to the conduct of the late business of Holms in burning the ships and town, saying, it was a great thing indeed, and of great profit to us in being of great loss to the enemy; but that it was wholly a business of chance."—*Life of Penn*, vol. ii. p. 415.

As some sort of reply to this, four or five Dutch men-of-war fell upon some seventeen English ships in the Elbe, near Glückstadt, and drove them, with loss, up to Hamburgh. But this was obviously, not a legitimate operation of war.

The French alliance had been as yet of no manner of use to the Hollanders. Contemporary historians say that the terms of the alliance were such as could only issue in making France strong by sea, both in providing her with ships built in Holland and by Dutch skill, and by giving her the benefit of Dutch nautical experience. But negociations were now (August 1666) in progress to bring the Duke of Beaufort up from Portugal in order to form a junction with the Dutch somewhere between Boulogne and Dieppe.

To effect the object, De Ruiter got to sea with a replenished and refitted fleet of 71 men-of-war and 27 fire-ships, having as his second and third in command, Admirals de Gent and Bankert. On the 29th of August the fleet anchored between Dunkirk and Nieuport, and then, hearing that the Duke of Beaufort had got so far on his way to join him as to have arrived at and left Rochelle, De Ruiter weighed on the 1st September, and made sail through the Straits of Dover.

From remarks in Pepys' diary it seems certain that our fleet was at this moment not at all complete. It was particularly deficient in fire-ships. "But, Lord!" cries Pepys, "to see how my Lord Brouncker undertakes the despatch of the fire-ships when he is no more fit for it than a porter!"* This and other deficiencies may account for what followed, and may tend to reconcile the otherwise irreconcilable stories of the Dutch and English recorders. The Dutch story, which presents a good deal of perplexity, even by itself, is that near Boulogne the English fleet came in sight, advanced on the Dutch, then fled, pursued by the Hollanders, who were unable to bring them to action. The English story is that they made every effort to bring the Dutch to action, but that the latter hauled into shoal water where they could not be got at, and then a gale of wind sprang up and drove the English off the coast. All that seems certain is that nothing was done; that the Duke of Beaufort never advanced beyond Dieppe.

The Dutch, however, captured an English ship, the *Royal Charles*, of 56 guns and 200 men.† But on the other hand Sir

* *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 415.

† I suppose this was a merchant ship. There was a *Royal Charles*, carrying the flag of Admiral Hubbard in the English fleet, but she carried 82 guns and 700 men. See Charnock's *History of Marine Architecture*, vol. ii., p. 398.

Thomas Allen, who commanded the White squadron of the English fleet, met a part of the French fleet, captured the *Ruby*, of 700 guns and 500 men, drove ashore and burnt some others, and forced the rest up the Seine. It seems probable, on the whole, that the threat of the English fleet was sufficient to prevent the junction, and that very possibly Rupert and Albemarle felt that if that end could be secured by the threat, it was a safer plan than attacking the Dutch in the immediate vicinity of so large and powerful a division as the French fleet composed.

There is at this point an indication of a change in the conduct of naval war which subsequently became a permanent characteristic, the features of which must be dealt with later on. Practically, up to this time, we have heard little or nothing of detached cruisers. But now we hear that while the main fleets of both nations were in the Channel to the southward, there was an action between a squadron of five Dutch cruisers, and another of English cruisers under Commodore Robertson near the Texel. Three of the Dutch were captured or destroyed.

We come now near the most curious episode, and also the best known of all that occurred in the three Dutch wars—the Dutch raid on the Medway and Thames.

Negociations for peace had been set up as early as July in 1666, and they continued with increasing hopes of result through September, October, and November. Then Breda was agreed on as the place where the plenipotentiaries should meet to settle terms finally.

Apparently, at first, the possible approach of peace had no influence on the naval preparation, as on the 2nd October 1666, the Duke of York gave directions for arranging the winter service: an immediate convoy to Gottenberg to bring home our merchant ships, another to guard the merchant fleet to the Mediterranean, and to bring home the ships at Leghorn; winter guards for the narrow seas to secure the trade between Newcastle and London, a few ships in the Downs, and "the chief station at Portsmouth, which may require a good strength, since no man knows what either Dutch or French may attempt for passing the Channel for a a conjunction," a guard "for securing the trade at the Land's End and soundings, which, if the French lie about Brest (whither they are gone), may require good ships."* But in a few days there was a great question of money, with heat and strong language in the Council between Prince Rupert and Mr. Pepys. The former

* Sir W. Coventry to Sir W. Penn. See *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 422.

declared no fleet was ever brought home in so good a state as the last; the latter averred that Sir William Penn, who was making the inquiry at Sheerness, had written that he dreaded the reports he was to receive from the surveyors of the defects of the fleet.* And then Pepys and the Court and everyone else seemed to forget all the grave issues surrounding them, and to be concerned only in attiring themselves "solemnly in the Persian manner," † and were ready to listen to the artfully arranged suggestions of the Dutch, that the war was over, that peace was virtually certain, and that they were disbanding and dismantling their fleet.

Pepys' diary is so curiously illustrative of the circumstances out of which the raid arose, that I cannot do better than quote, as I find it quoted, in the *Life of Penn*.

March 6th, 1667.—To Whitehall; and here the Duke of York did aquaint us (and the King did the like also afterwards, coming in) with his resolution of altering the manner of the war this year; that is, we shall keep what fleet we have abroad, in several squadrons. So that now all is come out; but we are to keep it as close as we can, without hindering the work that is to be done in preparation to this. Great preparations there are to fortify Sheerness and the yard at Portsmouth, and forces are drawing down to both those places, and elsewhere by the sea-side; so that we have some fear of an invasion; and the Duke of York did himself declare his expectation of the enemy's blocking us up here in the river, and therefore directed that we should send away all the ships that we have to fit out hence.

What had happened is told by the Duke of York himself. "The Parliament," he says, "giving but weak supplies for the war, the King, to save charges, is persuaded by the Lord Chancellor (Clarendon), the Lord Treasurer (Southampton), the Duke of Albemarle, and the other Ministers, to lay up the first and second-rate ships, and make only a defensive war in the next campaign. The Duke of York opposed this, but was overruled."‡

Pepys goes on:—

March 23rd.—At the office, where Sir W. Penn came, being returned from Chatham, from considering the means of fortifying the river Medway, by a chain at the Stakes and ships laid there with guns, to keep the enemy from coming up to burn our ships; all our care being now to fortify ourselves against their invading us.

March 24th.—To the Duke of York, where we all met, and there was the King also; and all our discourse was about fortifying of the Medway, and Harwich (which is to be entrenched quite round) and Portsmouth. And here they advised with Sir Godfrey Lloyd and Sir Bernard de Gunn, the two great engineers, and had the plates drawn before them; and, indeed, all their care they now take is to fortify themselves, and are not ashamed of it; for when, by and by, my Lord Arlington came in with

* Sir W. Coventry to Sir W. Penn. See *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., 424.

† Evelyn on the 18th October, quoted in the *Life of Penn*, vol. II., p. 425.

‡ *Life of King James II.*, vol. i., p. 425, quoted in the *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 451.

letters, and seeing the King and D. of York give us, and the officers of the Ordnance, directions in this matter, he did move, that we might do it as privately as we could, that it might not come into the Dutch Gazette presently: as the King's and D. of York's going down the other day to Sheerness was, the week after, in the Harlem Gazette. The King and D. of York both laughed at it, and made no matter, but said, 'Let us be safe, and let them talk; for there is nothing will trouble them more than to hear that we are fortifying ourselves." And the D. of York said, "What said Marshal Tourenne, when some in vanity said that the enemies were afraid, for they entrenched themselves? 'Well,' says he, 'I would they were not afraid, for then they would not entrench themselves, and so we could deal with them the better.'"

What appears remarkable in all this is the clear forecast of what would happen, two months before it did happen. It cannot be said that there was any surprise in the Dutch action, nor does it appear that there was much deception on their part. Every one seems to have known perfectly well that if the fleet was not kept up, the enemy would take advantage of it, and sail up the Thames to do what mischief might be done.

The Dutch fell in completely with the expectation. With a fleet of 60 sail and a body of troops, De Ruiter put to sea on the 1st of June and made straight for the Thames, designing not only to copy the example set by the English in the Vlie the year before, but being supplied with troops, to make a much heavier descent upon the country. They anchored at the mouth of the Thames on the 7th, and hearing that 10 or 12 English frigates, with a convoy of 20 merchant ships bound to Barbadoes, were in the Hope,* a detachment of 17 light frigates, with fire-ships and small vessels, was prepared and despatched up the river under the command of Admiral de Gent, on the 9th of June.

It is worthy of remark at this point, how precisely, so far, the practice followed that pursued in the Vlie. The main fleet lies outside keeping guard; the shipping is made the first object of attack, and a detachment of light ships is sent to conduct it. The descent upon the land comes afterwards in both cases, even though in the latter there was military force which there was not in the former.† In the case of the Vlie, the attack is planned and made after the sea has been cleared of fleets capable of interfering; in the case of the Thames, it is undertaken with the knowledge that no naval force exists which is capable of interfering.

De Gent met with foul and light winds, and was never able to reach a higher point than a mile and a half below the Lower Hope (that would be somewhere off Thames Haven), and meanwhile the

* The Lower Hope, above Thames Haven and below Tilbury Fort.

† The whole of the troops, however, were not immediately available. *See* next p.

ships there all escaped to the upper reaches of the river. This part of the expedition having miscarried, attention was turned to Sheerness and its newly arranged and apparently incomplete defences.

However to-day [observes young Cornelius De Witt, the son of the Pensioner, who was attached to the fleet in a civil capacity], about noon* (the 10th June), as the tide began to come in, we advanced as far as the mouth of the river of Chattam. We presently gave orders to the land troops and marine soldiers to make a descent, and to attack the fort of Sheerness. In the meanwhile we advanced with our men-of-war, and anchored before the same fort. At our approach, one of the King's frigates with some other vessels, and some fire-ships that were there, betook themselves to flight, and the men in the fort ran away likewise before our troops got thither; so that after the fort had been cannonaded about an hour and a half, our seamen scaled it to pull down from thence the English banner. We found there fifteen pieces of cannon, which we carried off to our ships; and a great magazine of masts, yards, and in general of all necessaries for the rigging of ships, valued at near 400,000 livers. We gave order to all our captains to carry, each of them, on board a good quantity, and to set fire to the rest. Because the most part of the troops were separated from us by foul weather, the general officers thought not fit to engage themselves too far up the country with so few people, or else they might have done a great deal of mischief. We are, however, of opinion to keep the river of London blocked up, and to hinder the passage of ships there, as much as 'tis possible for us. And to that effect Lieutenant Admiral De Ruiter is to come up and joyn us with the main body of the fleet.†

Since my last letter of the 10th [he again writes to the States-General] by which I informed your High and Mightyneses of the taking of Sheerness, we have received fresh marks of God's protection by several glorious advantages we have newly obtained. After we had detached away some advice-yachts, and several boats armed, to go and sound the passage from hence to Chattam, we resolved to send up thither to-day Lieutenant-Admiral de Gent's squadron; and accordingly by the favour of a good N.E. wind, we unmoored from Sheerness at six in the morning (of June 12th). About noon we arrived near some English men-of-war, having on board them very large guns, and being very well manned, who made a show at first as if they would make a brisk defence; but as soon as we had burnt four or five of them, some of the others were deserted, so that we took them. I cannot at present give you a particular account of what ships perished in the flames; but I know very well the *Royal Charles*, carrying ninety brass guns, and another carrying a like number, fell into our hands. There are still four or five more a little above us, against which we sent some of ours, and because there is a very great consternation among the English, we doubt not but to take them. According to the advices we have had of the enemy, they have sunk sixteen or eighteen ships, the most part fire-ships, to block the passage of the river against us. But, in spite of all these precautions, our ships are passed up, and we flatter ourselves with the hopes to bring along with us those which we shall have taken.‡

Albemarle was in command at Chatham, and was an eye-witness of all the destruction wrought, which, no doubt, was minimized as much as possible in his official report, which was presented to Par-

* "Up;" says Pepys, "and news brought us that the Dutch are come as high as the Nore, and more pressing orders for fire-ships." *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 441.

† *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 425.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

liament in February 1668. He complained bitterly of everything. Nothing was complete. Batteries ordered were incomplete; the *Royal Charles*, which had been ordered up the river three months before, was left below to be captured. The ships sunk were not sunk in the right place, and ships ordered to be sunk were not sunk. He "could not get a carpenter but two that were running away." He "had no assistance from Commissioner Pett, nor no gunners nor men to draw on the guns, except the two masters of attendance." And so on, with the usual string of excuses made by those who have failed. But he had seen the guard-ships burnt, and the *Royal Charles* (82) carried off on the 12th, and the *Great James* (82)—otherwise the *Royal James*—the *Royal Oak* (76), and the *Loyal London* (90) burnt on the 13th, while he looked helplessly on, which was enough to set a man throwing the blame on somebody else, and particularly so to him as one of the advisers of this "defensive war." For the ships were all flag-ships, the very finest in the navy, and had carried admirals' flags at sea under his command only a very few months before.

This act of destruction completed the work in the Medway. The Dutch fell back to the mouth of the river again, blocking it and putting a stop to all commerce by their presence. But troops were landed in Sheppy, and foraged indiscriminately for the use of the fleet. De Gent was also detached on the 15th of June to the Shetland Islands to pick up and convoy home the Dutch East India ships. Attempts were also made to send a light squadron up to Gravesend, but between newly-sunken ships and newly-erected batteries the defences were sufficient to frustrate the plan.

The Dutch being reinforced by fresh troops, it was determined to make an attack on Landguard Fort, Harwich, and the plan settled was as follows:—1,600 soldiers and 400 seamen were landed—I think it must have been on the beach towards Felixstowe—out of fire from the fort. Vice-Admiral Evertz was, with fourteen men-of-war, to attack the fort on the sea-side, while Rear-Admiral Van Nes was to enter the harbour and attack from that side. Then, when the fire was subdued, the land force was to advance and complete the capture. But they had reckoned without their host; for the shoal water prevented either squadron from operating; only a distant and useless fire being opened by Evertz. The troops made some attempts to advance on the fort in the open, but seeing that without the supporting fire of the ships it would be impossible to succeed, they re-embarked.

The Dutch now set about more regularly blockading the Thames

by smaller force higher up, while detachments watched off Harwich and the North Foreland to guard against surprise either from north or south.

The news of the conclusion of peace reached the Dutch on the 4th of July, but such was the elation of the States at their success, that, on the plea that the treaty was not fully ratified, De Ruiter was ordered into the Channel to prey upon the English commerce and to alarm the southern ports; while Van Nes was directed to push up the Thames again to do what mischief he might. De Ruiter, very possibly because of his knowledge of the situation, did little but to create alarm. But there was a sharp encounter between Van Nes and Sir Edward Spragge, who had got together some naval force and a good provision of fire-ships. The Dutch failed to make any impression, and in the end resumed the blockade of the Thames until the ratification of the treaty of peace relieved them from that duty.

CHAPTER IV.

The Struggle for the Command of the Sea—(*continued*).

Experience has taught that a superior commerce cannot be protected by only an equal fleet; and the Dutch, in the third war, still abandon commerce till greater strength is gained.—The direct struggle for the command of the sea is resumed at Sole Bay.—It is useless to prepare for making descents on the enemy's coast unless his fleet is first disposed of.—The embarkation of troops by the Allies is of no service. —The great powers of naval forces on distant expeditions if not met by like forces.

The Dutch, throughout the whole of their second war with England, had carried it out on the principle of a simple and direct struggle for the command of the sea. They had nerved themselves for it by the abandonment of their commerce for the time, in order that neither their attention nor their forces should be diverted for a moment from the attainment of the main object in view. The result was that the protection of commerce dropped out of the regular programme, and great battles no longer hinged on the necessity of protecting convoy.

The completeness of the change of system between the first and second Dutch wars is easily lost sight of from the confused, undramatic, and pointless way in which the stories have generally been told. But we note it when we observe that out of the seven battles which marked the progress of the first Dutch war, four arose directly out of the necessity of protecting commerce, and that three times, if not four, it was chance which prevented the occurrence of battles under similar circumstances; and in the second war, though there were captures of merchant ships on both sides, no battle came about in consequence of an endeavour to protect them. Thus, in the first war, we see it begin in July 1652 with an attack on the large squadron protecting the Dutch herring busses. Immediately afterwards, the accident of a gale of wind

prevents Tromp from bringing Blake to action near the Shetland Islands, as a means of securing the return of the homeward-bound West India ships. In August, De Ruiter fights Ayscue off Plymouth, in defence of his convoy of 60 ships. In November, Tromp attacks Blake near the Straits of Dover, in order to leave the Channel free for the passage of 300 outward-bound Dutch ships. In February 1653, Blake in the Channel endeavours to intercept Tromp's convoy of 250 homeward-bound ships. In May, Dean and Monk all but bring Tromp to action off the Dutch coast, in order to make themselves masters of the 200 ships he was convoying outward; and in June, Evertz was only prevented by the accident of wind from attacking Bodley in the Downs, when he was in charge of eight merchant-ships.

In the second war, all this had passed away. Not a single battle arose out of commerce protection, and no outward-bound convoy left the ports of Holland. There were attacks, and very heavy ones, upon merchant shipping, but the heaviest were made upon ships at anchor in port; as at Bergen, and in the Vlie, on the English side, and as at Glückstadt, and the attempt on the ships in the Lower Hope on the Dutch side. It was more by chance than of set purpose that the Dutch captured nine English merchant ships on their way to fight the battle of Sole Bay; and that the English possessed themselves at sea of some of the scattered merchant ships, which they had failed to master at Bergen.

On both sides, again, we may observe a tendency to push the advantages even of a temporary command of the sea. This is shown principally in the successful and unsuccessful attacks on shipping in harbour; but more strongly in the descents upon the land, as at the islands of Vlie and Schelling, where the English appeared to land with their ordinary crews only; and at Sheerness and Harwich, where the Dutch employed regular troops. Still we have to note that these descents, as they were called, were only made when temporary command of the sea had been gained, and then only by detachments, the main body of the fleet being in all cases, as it were, securing the rear of the attacking parties.

Naval war had, in fact, found its limits and settled down into its bearings. The things which could and the things which could not be done with reasonable hopes of success were making themselves manifest, and it was being seen in what direction the ultimate appeal to naval force lay.

In both wars the English had had, on the whole, the best of it, and the Dutch, on the whole, the worst of it; and things at

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the end of the second war remained so much as they had been at the beginning of it—the raid on the Medway and Thames being quite understood on both sides to have been deliberately courted by the English—that the third Dutch war was laid out on the same principles as the second.

There were the usual reprisals before war was declared, and England, taking advantage of her position as lying across the stream of Dutch commerce, fell upon it in March 1672 at the back of the Isle of Wight (No. 1 on the chart), and the small force that could be got together under Sir Robert Holms was sufficient to levy a heavy contribution upon the unfortunate and unprepared Dutchmen.

France, which had failed to make herself of any use to Holland as an ally in the second war, was very much of the same mind towards England in the third war. But not quite; for she now brought a contingent of 36 men-of-war and 22 fire-ships under Count D'Estreés, and formed a junction with the Duke of York at the back of the Isle of Wight on the 14th of May, the united fleets sailing immediately to the favourite open anchorage of Southwold, or Sole Bay, on the coast of Sussex. But it may be usefully pointed out that the French alliance was employed, not to produce an overwhelming force at sea, but merely to relieve England from some part of the expense of the war. The Dutch generally sent to sea a fleet as large as that of the Allies.

On the outbreak of the war, the Hollanders prohibited sea-borne commerce in much the same terms as in 1665 and 1666. They were eager to contest directly the great point at issue, and during the hours of darkness before day broke on May 28th, the cannon of the look-out ships announced to the allied fleet then at anchor, the approach of the enemy (No. 2 on the chart).

The Allies were 65 sail of English and 36 sail of French, with 22 fire-ships, besides small vessels. The Duke of York commanded in chief, under the red flag; the white squadron was wholly French, under D'Estrées; and the blue was commanded by the Earl of Sandwich. The Dutch were 91 sail of men-of-war, and 44 fire-ships, besides 23 yachts and small vessels. Their fleet was also in three squadrons, De Ruiter commanding in chief with the red flag; Admiral Bankert commanding the white squadron; and Admiral De Gent the blue.

The Allies were practically surprised. Many ships had to cut their cables to get into action, and the battle began between 7 and 8 A.M. De Ruiter said of it that he had never been in so

continuous and obstinate a fight. The whole French squadron held back, and took as little part as they possibly could in the action. They retired out of the way to the southward, but were followed up to some extent, and lost two of their ships. Sandwich in the *Royal James* was determinedly attacked by fire-ships. The ship was fired and burnt, and Sandwich was drowned in attempting to escape from her. But notwithstanding this loss, and notwithstanding the defection of the French squadron, the Dutch were worsted, and fell back towards their own coasts, followed up by the English and by the French, who rejoined next day. The Dutch claimed to have burnt the *Royal James*, to have sunk two first-rates, and to have destroyed two other ships. They admitted that one of their ships was taken and another sunk.

The Allies now appeared off the Dutch coast with some intention of making a descent somewhere in Zealand, but in the near presence of the Dutch fleet found it would not be feasible. They then made some preparation for a descent on the island of Texel, but circumstances of tide caused the abandonment of the idea, and the squadrons were employed in the simple blockade of the Maas and the Texel.

The Dutch at this time were terribly pressed by the advance of the French armies by land, and the alarmed state of the sea-coasts. They sued for peace without success, but did not feel themselves strong enough to attempt another sea-fight with the Allies. But their privateers were in operation, and one of them carried an English East India ship as a prize into Bergen. The English also made prizes, and hearing at length that fourteen East India ships were on their way home north of Scotland, they cruized by the Dogger Bank in hopes of intercepting them. The merchant-ships, however, got safely into Bergen without having been seen, and as winter approached, all the war forces returned into their respective ports.

At the beginning of 1673 the Dutch were full of a novel device, the idea of which has more than once since proved attractive, though I believe it has never been put in practice. They thought it might be feasible to block up the Thames by sinking vessels there, and for this purpose prepared eight ships with stones at Amsterdam, which were afterwards taken into the Texel. I assume that the early appearance of the English fleet at sea prevented any attempts to carry this design into execution. I can find no reason stated, only that the attempt was not made.

In the early part of May, the Dutch fleet began to assemble in

the Schooneveld, the anchorage off the mouth of the Schelde. De Ruiter is said to have failed in a design to intercept the English Canary, Bordeaux, and Newcastle merchant fleets in their passage into the Thames, and had then returned to the Schooneveld,* but it is not mentioned by my earlier and fuller authority. However this may be, there they were on the 22nd of May.

The Allies had joined their forces off Rye, and they, too, had new ideas as to what was before them, for they took on board a body of troops with the intention of effecting a landing somewhere in Zealand. They had 84 men-of-war, and 26 fire-ships and small vessels. In order to prevent the tendency to hang back which had been displayed at Sole Bay the year before, the French were now distributed in the fleet, and not drawn together in a separate squadron as had before been the case. Rupert commanded the Red Squadron, D'Estrées the White, and Spragge, who had distinguished himself in the Thames in 1667, commanded the Blue.

The Dutch were 70 men-of-war besides fire-ships, under De Ruiter, Tromp, and Bankert; but their fleet was not complete, and was being gradually augmented. The Allies came in sight of the Dutch fleet thus anchored, on the 22nd May; but the weather was foggy, and the lie of the shoals thereabouts was not known to the former fleet. Soundings gained could not be fixed in consequence of the fog, and the advance on the Dutch was delayed, the allied fleet anchoring in the neighbourhood. Bad weather followed for two or three days, and still further postponed action; but on the 28th of May, the anniversay of the Battle of Sole Bay, both fleets were under way and came to action (No. 3 on the chart).

The battle began about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and it lasted in the usual confused form† until 10 o'clock at night, when the Dutch claimed a victory, but anchored under cover of their shoals.

Great slaughter had been done on the English ships in consequence of their being crowded with troops; and it must be added that it could only have been by entire miscalculation that these troops were on board, as taking ships crowded with useless men

* Burchett, p. 403. Lediard, vol. ii., p. 600, who also seems to speak as if De Ruiter, with 42 sail and his stone vessels, was off the Thames on the 2nd May, and frightened off by news of a fleet in the river.

† "The two Royal Fleets made a motion, and having cast their squadrons into the form of a crescent made up directly towards the Dutch."—*Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 464.

into a fleet action must have been well understood to be a needless sacrifice of life. It seems clear that the Allies must have assumed that the Dutch fleet would not appear at sea, and that they could have made their contemplated descent without interruption. They were now in this position, that while they had lost but two men-of-war, both French, and the Dutch had lost one, which was disabled, and sank during the night with great loss of life, they claimed a victory without being able to follow it up, and so disprove the Dutch claim in the same direction; for crowded with wounded, and embarrassed with the troops, they were not at all desirous to renew the action, however much it might be necessary to keep a watch on the movements of the Dutch fleet.

As a consequence of this inaction the Dutch recovered their spirits and hopes, and on the 4th of June they made good their claims by putting to sea to assume the offensive directly. They were near the Allies by noon, but these drew off so persistently to the north-westward, that it was not till 5 o'clock in the evening that the battle began (No. 4 on the chart). The various historians are in direct contradiction over the chief events of the battle, which were, whether the Dutch, as Cornelius Tromp distinctly says they did, chased the Allies to within five miles of Sole Bay, and were only prevented by darkness from continuing the battle,* or whether the English turned and drove the Dutch back to Schooneveld, which is the English statement.† It may be noted as something in dispute which cannot be settled here. What is material to note is that there was a second battle nine days after the first, in which the Dutch assumed the offensive, and that after it each fleet retired to its own shores.

Perhaps it may here be usefully remarked that one of the historians‡ not only admits the unwillingness of the Allies to come to action on account of their being hampered with their wounded, but claims that the Dutch, after their stay on their own coast, were reinforced and refitted in a way which was impracticable for the Allies at sea. This is, no doubt, possible, though it is denied by the Dutch so far as any reinforcement goes; but it illustrates the position taken up by a competent authority, not from his knowledge as a seaman, for he was not one, but from his experience as a naval statesman. This was the Duke of York's secretary, Sir William

* *Life of Cornelius Tromp*, p. 476.

† Berkley, p. 514. Burchett, p. 403. Lediard explains it, vol. ii., p. 602, by saying the Dutch being to windward were able to hold off, and did so.

‡ Lediard, vol. ii., p. 601.

Coventry, and Pepys records his opinion in the following words:—"30th (July 1666).—To Sir W. Coventry, at St. James'. I find him speaking very slightly of the late victory (the victory off the North Foreland, which was followed by the cruise upon the Dutch coast); dislikes their staying with their fleet up their coast, believing that the Dutch will come out in fourteen days, and then we, with our unready fleet, by reason of some of the ships being maimed, shall be in bad condition to fight them upon their own coast."* Not precisely contemplating the same circumstances, but still with a tendency to the same line of thought, Lord Howe wrote in a similar strain a hundred and thirty years later. Doubtless these views operated on both sides of the North Sea, and militated against any attempt at that persistent watching of Dutch or English ports which was so much enforced in later wars, and so notably on this very Dutch coast by Duncan. Both in liability to damage by weather, and in defective victualling, it must probably be admitted that the ships of the middle of the seventeenth century and those of the end of the eighteenth differed largely, and with disadvantage in the former period. The practice after this battle, and after so many others, of both sides retiring into port and leaving the sea open, must to some extent be assigned to these causes, though possibly more to mere custom existing till another custom supervened.

No ships were lost on either side in the encounter of the 4th of June; but the Dutch authority states that the Allies admitted a loss of over 3,000 men, and this, if true, confirms the account of the crowded state of the ships, and supplies further proof of the reasons why they were not keen about close action. But, notwithstanding the lessons to the contrary which they would seem to have received, as to the great difficulty of making a descent on the enemy's shore until his fleet had been fully and finally dealt with, the Allies were still full of the project; and having landed their wounded, they took on board 7,000 fresh troops, and put to sea again on the 17th of June.

But the Dutch meanwhile showed an advance in the art of naval war by detaching a small squadron of observation to the Thames, under Rear-Admiral de Haan, who, on his return, was able to report having seen some 70 men-of-war at anchor off Sheerness, and of having heard that 30,000 troops were to be embarked at Tilbury Hope in preparation for a descent on Zealand. The Dutch found

* Quoted in *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 412, already quoted in chap. iii.

themselves unable to bring together sufficient naval force to make sure of fighting on something of an equality with the 60 English and 30 French ships of war which appeared before the Maas and Schevelling* on the 23rd and 24th of June. In proximity to the 70 Dutch ships ready in the waters of Zealand, no descent was attempted, and the Allies passed to the northward off the Texel, along the coasts of Holland and Friesland to Vlie, Ameland and the Western Ems, and then back to the Texel again.

The only claim made by the English historians to success in this demonstration is that it harassed the enemy's troops on the coast, and kept them continually alert; that it blocked up his ports, and endangered his returning East India merchant fleet, of which, however, but one was taken. On the other hand, a fleet crowded up with troops, which were made no use of whatever, was in almost a critical condition in case even the inferior Dutch fleet should come upon it.

The Dutch stood these insults and threatenings to their coast for a fortnight, and then, about the 3rd of August, about the time that the Allies got back off the Texel, they put to sea, and stood alongshore to the northward. Foul winds, and possibly great caution, hindered their progress, so that it was not till the 10th of August that the fleets sighted each other, and about eight o'clock in the morning joined in a furious and final battle for that command of the sea which had never yet fallen, and was not now to fall, fully into the hands of either power.

The Allies were, as before observed. 90 strong under the former commanders—Rupert, D'Estrées, and Spragge. But a trust was once more placed in the French, which they were once more and finally to betray. D'Estrées commanded the white squadron, which was composed entirely of his own ships. The Dutch were 70 strong, under De Ruiter, Cornelius Tromp, and Bankert. The fight that ensued is said by the author of *Columna Rostrata* to have been "like a general war of the elements," and it lasted till after sunset (No. 5 on the chart). This could not have been, considering the great numerical inferiority of the Dutch, had not D'Estrées from the very first held aloof and left the English and Dutch to fight it out while he looked on. Tromp was in the *Golden Lion*, and Spragge in the *Prince*.† These two fell upon one another, until both ships were so disabled that they shifted their flags to

* Scheveningen, the port of the Hague.

† The historians say the *Royal Prince*, but it was probably the *Prince, 90*, built at Chatham in 1670. See Charnock, vol. ii., p. 426.

the *Comet* and *St. George*, and fell upon one another again. The *St. George* became a second ship disabled under the feet of the English admiral, and he then passed into a boat to go on board the *Royal Charles*; but on his way a shot cut his boat in two, and he was drowned. In other parts of the fleet equally stubborn contests were carried out, but in the end it does not seem to have been contested that the Dutch were victors. There was very slight loss of ships on either side; the English admitted a yacht sunk, and the Dutch only allow a loss of a few fire-ships, either sunk or "uselessly spent;" but there was great loss of men and officers. The English, besides Spragge, lost four captains, and the Dutch lost two vice-admirals, de Liefde, and Sweers, with two captains, and many superior officers wounded. The destruction of men in the English fleet was said to be very heavy, no doubt from their crowded condition. The Dutch claim to have kept the sea till the 12th September, without sign of any attempt by the English to contest their substantial victory.

This was the last act of the war. The English nation was sick of a Catholic alliance against a Protestant State, and the navy was heartily sick of consorts in battle whose policy it was to induce them to enter into action with inferior forces of their own, and then to leave them to do the best they could. Peace was concluded in February 1664, and the next time destiny brought English and Dutch into hostile naval operations, she brought them in side by side in the third possible change of alliance between the three great European nations. It had been first Dutch and French against the English, out of which very little had come. It was next French and English against the Dutch, out of which only a little more had come. It was next to be English and Dutch against the French, out of which a great deal was to come.

I have, perhaps, sufficiently remarked upon the leading characteristics of the first and second Dutch wars, and how the first was carried on with the idea that the command of the sea was not a primary necessity; that an extensive commerce, which was in a sense the life-food of the State, might be protected by forces which were only large enough to contend on a fair equality with the enemy's war-ships bent on the capture or destruction of the very thing which the Dutch forces were assembled to protect; how the enemy, the English, with a smaller commerce, and consequently less distractions, were able to devote themselves almost completely to assuming the offensive; how, after pursuing this policy throughout the first war, the Dutch, learning their lesson, wholly changed

it on the outbreak of the second war, and practically held their own, though with marked signs of inferiority, in a direct contention for the command of the sea, throughout it; and then, having reached firm ground in the wanderings of experience, held to it on the outbreak of the third war, and maintained it with really improved success throughout its course.

These are broad principles which lie, as it were, in prominent boulders on the plain landscape, as we survey, in the brief and not keenly critical or too closely investigating way we have done in these chapters, the further formation of the rules of naval war. As to what may specially come from a comparison of the general conduct of the third war with that which characterized the second, I think we may almost say that impatience with the method adopted in the second war was manifested on both sides in the third. There had been a descent on the shipping in the Vlie, which had been extraordinarily successful to the English and extraordinarily damaging to the Dutch. There had been a descent by the Dutch on the dismantled war-ships of the English at Chatham, which, though quite as successful to the Dutch, could only have been made up by the counters representing insult, to the damage they had suffered in the Vlie. Then, again, there had been Tiddiman's unsuccessful attempt on the merchant fleet at Bergen, and men must have considered that probably a heavier force would have succeeded.

Altogether, when the third war broke out, there must have been a good deal of floating feeling about in favour of something more dramatic and telling than a continuation of the long string of pitched battles, which wound its way back through twenty years of remembrance; and so there is soon on the side of the Dutch the idea of snatching an advantage, not by necessary exertion and sacrifice, but by something with a preponderating element of chance in it. So the stone ships to block the Thames are prepared, and so, if some of the historians are right, does the scheme come to nothing, because the presence of superior English force eliminates chance. So do the English take on board troops for a descent on the Dutch shores, as it seems, on the chance that the Dutch fleet would not interfere; and then, after it is found how much the Dutch fleet does interfere, and has to be fought off the Schooneveld twice; and how heavy the loss of life has been in consequence, so far as we may gather, of too great reliance upon chance, even then this desire of a descent favoured by chance is not weakened. Fresh troops are embarked, who appear to have been useful as targets.

for the Dutch chiefly in the one operation—a general action of the old type—in which it was found feasible to engage.

It may be difficult to say with the materials before me—there may be none, in fact, which would give us the exact truth—but yet there is ground for believing that men did not lay sufficient stress on the circumstances surrounding the successes of the Vlie and the Medway, and hoped for the successes without the presence of like conditions.

Sandwich need have had no apprehensions in detaching Tiddiman early in August, for he was there himself with a full and victorious fleet, the Dutch having been, not two months before, frightfully beaten back into their ports, and full of the confusions, bickerings, and divided counsels, that the beaten side is prone to.

When Rupert and Albemarle detached Sir Robert Holms on the peculiarly successful enterprise in the Vlie, it was but a fortnight after the Dutch, thoroughly beaten in the battle off the North Foreland, had been driven behind the shelter of their shoals, leaving the victorious English entirely unopposed at sea ; and when the Dutch made their appearance in the Medway, and carried off and burnt some of our finest war-ships, it was because the English had deliberately disarmed and unmanned those ships, clearly anticipating, and recording their anticipation three months before, that they would be attacked in the way they were. And on such grounds, the Dutch would have shown greater wisdom and prescience had they postponed all idea of blocking up the Thames in 1673 until they were assured of being able to protect the detachment employed in the duty ; and the Allies would have shown a clearer apprehension of the situation had they been fully prepared to guarantee a landing without interruption from the Dutch fleet, without loss of communication with their own ships after landing, and with security for their re-embarkation. The histories do not tell us why these troops were so uselessly and so slaughterously carried about for two weeks on the Dutch coast, but reading between the lines, we seem to see that it was the want of these guarantees that enforced it.

One of the earlier historians considers that the advance of the Dutch to fight the battle of the 4th of June was an unusual proceeding on their part, " for, from the first action against the English in these seas, anno 1652, till this time, they had seldom voluntarily engaged out of sight of their own coast ; nor had they ever been the aggressors in any one considerable fight, except twice, when they had the fortune to surprise the English, first in the Downs,

in the time of Blake, and then in Souldbay, the former year (1672)."* I hardly think we can say that this was so, unless we injudiciously mingle the question of strategy which would determine the locality of the battle, and the question of tactics which would determine its conduct. At present I hardly touch at all upon the tactics pursued in these wars, and may dismiss Colliber's observation with the remark that inasmuch as it generally happened that the Dutch were to leeward, not by their choice, but by the accident of wind, it was hardly in their power in those days to become tactically the aggressors. Strategically, I think, we must rather accept the opposite view, and say that the Dutch in the three wars showed latterly a greater and not a less tendency to fight near home. In the first war, the last battle off the Texel was the only one which could properly be said to have been fought on the Dutch coast, and in the second war, the capture of the cruisers by Robertson off the Texel was the only fight on that side of the water. In the third war, on the other hand, three out of the four great battles were fought on the Dutch side of the North Sea; and I hardly think it was choice on the part of the Hollanders. I should say rather that a review of all the circumstances would show that they felt a decreasing power as each war went on, so that if the English had of themselves been as determined to beat the Dutch off the sea in 1672–73 as they had been in 1652–54, the war might have taken a different form, and the Dutch might have been pressed closer home than they were; but the third war was distasteful to the prevailing opinion in England, and the alliance with France served as an economy, not as an increase of force.

Without going more thoroughly into statistics than is conformable to the scope of this work, I cannot say how the question of the protection and loss of commerce may have affected exactly the conduct of the war and its popularity. My principal authority tells me that in the third war the loss of merchant ships by capture on both sides was considerable, but that it was greater on the side of the English than on that of the Dutch, simply because the Dutch prohibition left only the homeward-bound ships open to the English attack.† The immense destruction at the Vlie, and the considerable captures of the ships from Bergen, had in the second war probably far over-balanced the scale as against the Dutch; while in the first Dutch war we might almost say

* *Columna Rostrata*, p. 238. † *Columna Rostrata*, p. 250.

that the main effort had been immediately directed upon their enemy's commerce by the English. But if, while the battles of the war fleets, in consequence of the defections of the French, were fought without adequate result, and if English commerce had been suffering to a greater extent than that of the Dutch, there was some business objection to join to the moral one, and demand a cessation of the third war. English merchant shipping was immensely on the increase, as in 1688 it was estimated to have doubled since 1666, and if the Dutch by the prohibition of their own commerce were able to make the English losses proportionately the greater, the gain in so acting could be demonstrated.

All these wars were begun and ended on the sea. Even the successful raids that were made into territory extended hardly beyond the water territory, and the prizes drawn were water prizes. We may say it was the near equality of the combatants in every way which kept the battles off the land. When it was found difficult to get through with arrangements for even mere rushes at the land, the organizing of great expeditions such as Spain had set her heart on was out of the question. The wars adhered to the more unstable element simply, perhaps, because neither side could get off it.

While all that was really important in the drama was played in European waters, the byplot circulated in more distant parts of the world, wherever there were English or Dutch interests to attack or defend. In the first war, Van Galen on the one side and Commodore Bodley on the other fought in the Mediterranean over the right to carry on their own commerce unmolested, and to prevent the other from carrying on any at all, and did it with varying fortunes.

And then the old system of cross-raiding, begun in an irregular war of reprisals, was ushered in and continued amongst the distant possessions of both States in Africa and in the West Indies. Sir Robert Holms, entirely unopposed because no attempt or preparation to oppose him was or could have been made, ravaged down the West Coast of Africa, as already mentioned, to Cape Verd, Goree, Elmina, which withstood him, and Cape Coast Castle. Then he passed over to New Netherland, as New York was then called, and reduced it, because there was nothing to prevent him doing so. And then came the other side; for news reaching Holland of the mischief that had been quietly done, the Dutch Government proceeded to undo it again, or to do it over again equally secretly. De Ruiter, then at Cadiz, slipped

away quietly in Sir Robert Holms' footsteps, to retake, if possible, all that had been taken. He was, in some cases, successful, and he took the original English post of Fort Cormantin, though Cape Coast Castle and Chama held out against him. Then passing over to Barbados, he found himself not strong enough for more than the capture of merchant ships which were there, and at Monserrat, Nevis, and Newfoundland, after which he returned home to be placed in command of the home fleet as we have seen.

But later on, in 1666-67, we had that tranfer and re-transfer of islands in the West Indies from State to State which, from beginning to end, seems to have been characteristic of war in those latitudes. The English began by taking St. Eustace, Tobago, and other places from the Dutch. Then the Dutch, under Commodore Quiryns, made themselves masters of Surinam. Next the French and Dutch together all but possessed themselves of half the Island of St. Christopher's. A naval expedition from Barbados, to restore things at the former island, failed on account of dispersal by wind. The Dutch still gaining strength, Evertson recovered Tobago, and made many prizes on the coast of Virginia. But then Sir John Harman arrived from England at St. Christopher's with twelve frigates, in March 1667. This made a concentration of the French and Dutch necessary, and stopped the raiding till it was decided which nation was to have the control in these waters. There was a general action in May off St. Christopher's, as to which the immediate results are disputed; but the ultimate result was the separation of the French and Dutch, leaving the English in command of the sea, and enabling them to retake Surinam.

An early operation of the third war was the recapture of Tobago by five or six ships and a regiment of foot from Barbados, under Sir Thomas Bridger. On the other side, the Dutch population possessed themselves of the Island of St. Helena, and drove the English Governor and people into the ships at anchor. But Commodore Mondy with four ships-of-war, on his way to offer convoy to the East India fleet, wanting fresh water and perceiving he must retake the Island to get it, proceeded to that business and concluded it.

These special features of naval war will probably have to be reconsidered in some detail before we have done with them, in order to get more closely at their principles. We may say that in all the wars where the command of the sea was incomplete, and

where territories which might be captured were tenable after capture, this kind of thing went on. I believe, so far as I can see, that at the moment all that is before us is to note how closely conquest follows the naval steps, and how all other power is, as it were, swallowed up by naval power. It is not, of course, that even in this very early stage, we do not see how naval force may be rendered unable to effect its purpose; but the general result seems to give great preponderance to him who has the power over the water, and each possessor of this power seems to sweep all up as it progresses, leaving it to be again swept up by the next naval possessor of the broom.

CHAPTER V.

The Differentiation of Naval Force.

The promiscuous system of fighting in the early days of naval warfare did not tend to the production of any particular classes of ships.—The rise of the line of battle tended to increase the force of the ships forming part of it, and to equalize their power. —At the same time the pursuit and defence of commerce tended to develop a lighter class of ships.—The necessities of a fleet in having proper look-outs demanded a third class.—The results of these tendencies are traced down to 1813.

In the previous chapters I have endeavoured to trace the rise of true naval war and its nature; and then to show how, owing to the position which sea-borne commerce takes as the major part of the wealth and stability of nations, there may be, and have been, wars wholly naval—wars where the operations on the land, or against the land, have been insignificant, or else wholly absent, in comparison with the operations on the water.

But as naval war arose and developed without premeditation, and even without knowledge at first of what it really meant, it followed that it was only by degrees that men came to understand what kinds of naval force were required in the economies of naval war, and how these kinds of force could be most effectively distributed. If the first Anglo-Dutch war exhibited itself on a wholly new plan, a plan which had never been seen in the world before, it was quite possible to regard it as something exceptional, and to suppose that earlier types of war might revive. It did not follow at once that maritime nations should prepare for that kind of war, and no other; it was not certain that this struggle for the command of the sea was for ever after to be the one aim of naval nations, in the first instance; and that unless there was at the outbreak of the war excess of power on one side sufficient to assert and maintain it, the Anglo-Dutch type of war was permanent.

But when a second and a third war succeeded, of which the lines were, if anything, marked out in deeper cuts than ever, it could not but follow that all who had control over naval services should endeavour to prepare them for that kind of war and no other.

And what, so far, was this kind of war? It was, doubtless, chiefly a series of general actions between the most powerful forces that each side could bring to bear against the other. Secondarily, it was the defence and attack of commerce at sea. Thirdly, it was the attack and defence of commerce in port, supplemented here and there by attempts to damage the sources of naval strength, and to a very small extent by attempts to damage property on land. It had been made clear that the defence and attack of commerce could, and sometimes must, go on side by side with the direct struggle for the command of the sea; but equally clear that the power against which the balance turned by ever so little in the great primary contest, was terribly handicapped as to the defence of its commerce. It had also been fully demonstrated that it was entirely hopeless to think of making attacks on shipping in port, on sources of war supply, or on property on land, unless there were at least an assured local command of the sea surrounding the point attacked. This was possibly the lesson least easy to learn, seeing that until the advent of the Dutch wars the system of cross-raiding had not been abandoned.

Almost obviously some differentiation of naval force should have followed the determination of the Dutch in the second and third wars to abandon all attempts to defend their commerce, and by consequence to suppress it for the time. On the Dutch side, their whole power would be thrown into the form which was considered most suitable for the great fleet action, but they might also have looked to a small expenditure on vessels most suitable for attacking the commerce of the enemy at sea. On the English side, the knowledge that the Dutch were determined to throw their whole energies into the general fleet action, as a direct endeavour to get such a command of the sea as would enable them to restore their commerce, would compel special attention to the preparation of the fleet for general action. The absence of Dutch commerce would equally divert attention from the provision of means for commerce attack, and there would remain commerce defence. But even here the attitude of the Dutch would have been such as not to arouse great apprehension, and, therefore, even commerce defence might have held in general estimation a subordinate place.

Strategically, the effect was on both sides towards a dif-

ferentiation of force into that which was considered most suitable for the general fleet action, and that supposed most efficient for the attack and defence of commerce, apart from those great efforts which had characterized the first Dutch war, but which were eliminated from the second and third by reason of the Dutch withdrawal of their merchant ships from sea. Further, the strategical effect of the time was to minimise the force set apart for the secondary object.

The practice of privateering may be supposed to have tended still more to minimise the provision of public force for the attack on commerce. We have seen already* that, in the reign of Elizabeth, the practice of allowing subjects to fit out war-ships for preying on the enemy's commerce was in full force. The historians speak less of it in the Dutch wars, but still say enough to assure us that it was in effective force. To some extent, it relieved the states on both sides from the provision of a large force of vessels for the attack on commerce.

But if the strategical conditions of naval war thus tended to a differentiation, the tactical conditions tended even more strongly that way. When the general action—the purely naval action of ships under sail—took, in the first Dutch war, its place as a revival of the military battle of the ancients and of the middle ages on the water, it was a novelty, and there was little sense either that it would ultimately require particular classes of ships or assume any particular form. Preparations for a sea-fight had not, before this time, assumed either characteristic. There was no differentiation of force, and hardly any adoption of form.

We have seen that on the part of Spain, in 1588, the idea of a regular sea-fight appears to have been altogether absent. There was in the Spanish Armada, in fact, no differentiation of force, and no established order of fight.

But neither was there on our own side. We collected an immense force, but in the lists handed down to us there is no sign of any classification, of any gathering together of classes of ships for the purpose of concerted action. There were several lists or groupings of the ships, but all of them without classification. There were 34 ships serving with the Lord High Admiral, all apparently Queen's ships, and their gradations went steadily down from the *Triumph*, of 1,100 tons and 500 men, to the *Signet*, of 30 tons and 20 men. Of 10 ships "serving by tonnage with the Lord Admiral,"

* Page 6.

the gradation of class descended pretty evenly, from the *Edward of Maldon*, of 180 tons and 30 men, to the *Peppin*, of 20 tons and 8 men. With Sir Francis Drake were 32 ships, from the *galleon Leicester*, of 400 tons and 160 men, to the *Carvel*, of 30 tons and 24 men; and so on through several other divisions consisting of smaller ships, but each list offering a gradual fall in the force of the ships from the highest to the lowest.*

An analysis of the lists gives us 197 ships in all, manned by 15,785 men. The tonnage of some are omitted, but that of 175 of them came to 29,744 tons, and their sizes were thus distributed :—

Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
1	1,100	5	300
1	1,000	7	250
2	800	26	about 200
3	600	33	150
6	500	19	100
5	400	66	under 100
1	360		

There are thus no gaps, no points at which we can say, here are a group of ships suited to one purpose, and here a group suited to another. All the traces of classification fall into the one fact that as the ships grow smaller so they grow more numerous.

A list of the navy at the Queen's death in 1603, handed down to us by Sir William Monson, supplies the following analysis :—

Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
2	1,000	2	400
3	900	3	about 300
3	800	7	200
2	700	3	100
4	600	8	under 100
4	500		

In this list we have the same steady gradation downwards, from the most to the least powerful ships, but with the difference that the smaller ships are not so numerous, there being 20 ships of 400 tons and upwards and only 21 below that size. This is probably explained by the practice, which then obtained so largely, of mingling private enterprise with that of the State ; so that dependence was placed on the merchants to supply the smaller vessels required.

* See Charnock's *History of Marine Architecture*, vol. ii., p. 59.

Take, again, the list of the Queen's ships in the expedition of Essex to Cadiz,* and we find 17 ships which, as the fighting force, did not carry soldiers. There were 3 ships with crews of 340 men, 6 with 200 to 300 men, 2 with from 100 to 200 men, and 6 carrying under 100. Here still is the regular gradation from large to small, without any sign of classification or grouping such as would lead us to infer adaptation to particular purposes.

But in the early part of the seventeenth century there was a tendency to group the ships, which afterwards developed into the well-known system of rating which has only fallen out of use in our own day. But the proposal of Sir Robert Dudley (Duke of Northumberland), referred to, and the subsequent systems of classification and rating, were not prompted by considerations either strategical or tactical, having to do apparently only with convenient nomenclature, account, and finance.

Dudley's classification was as follows:—(1) The *galleon*, of 80 guns; (2) the *rambargo*, a light frigate or pinnace; (3) the *galizabra*, a galleas; (4) the *frigata*; (5) the *galeron*, a galley; (6) the *galerata*, a small galley; (7) the *passa-volante*, a dispatch vessel.

From the nature of this grouping, it is plain that the attempted classification was no more than a desire to put into order that which had no order, and to group several diverse classes into one or two which fairly represented the mean of them. This plan of grouping was not adopted, though it may have hastened the adoption of another one. This was the one adopted by His Majesty's Commissioners originally appointed to report on the state of the navy on the 12th February 1618. They reported on the numbers and tonnage of the ships they found, but it was not till they came to propose what the navy should be that they used any classification, or found any necessary. Then that which they used, and which remained the official classification for many years, had nothing to do with strategy or tactics, but was solely an administrative device. The navy proposed to be maintained and classed was:—

4	"Ships Royall,"	800 to 1,200	tons.
14	"Great Ships,"	600 to 800	,,
6	"Middling Ships,"	450	,,
2	"Small Ships,"	350	,,
4	"Pinnaces,"	80 to 250	tons.†

Not only do we detect no strategical or tactical idea in the names,

* See Charnock, vol. ii., p. 151. † *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 247.

but the descending dimensions are regular, and all that we can certainly assure ourselves of is that there was, for some reason or another, a preference for ships of nearly, but not quite, the largest class.

In a list of the navy at the close of James I.'s reign, 33 ships are given; but except for the increase in the numbers of ships of from 600 to 900 tons, the descent is steady from 1,200 tons and 55 guns to 80 tons, as if there were an equal use for all sorts of ships, except for those carrying 32 to 44 guns, and of from 600 to 900 tons.*

The system of dividing the larger ships of the British Navy into six rates appears to have been introduced during the Commonwealth. It was certainly fully adopted as early as 1660. About this time it was recognized that first rates carried over 70 guns; second rates, 60 to 70; third rates, 50 to 60; fourth rates, 38 to 50; fifth rates, 22 to 30; and sixth rates, 10 to 20. What we have to observe is that the divisions and classes are all administrative and financial. Nearly every man's pay, from the captain downwards, was regulated by the rate of the ship he happened to be serving in. But apart from this, there was the convenience—largely used—of speaking of the rate instead of the ship; and for years the master shipwrights at the yards received orders to build such and such a rate, and they were not expected to ask for any directions after receiving this simple order.

But if we reflect for a moment over this early constitution of the "rates," we can see that it not only omits to notice what strategy and tactics might demand, but it is the negation of it, supposing strategy and tactics should demand anything but a regular gradation of force. On the face of it, if we have such a classification as is just described, the inference is that we are going to build an equal number of each class. The last thing we should think of is that, for the purposes of war, some of these classes will require to be immensely swelled, and some reduced to a minimum, if not eliminated altogether. So the establishment of a series of rates or ranks, which lasted all through our wars, and which existed, in theory at least, till a couple of years ago, may have been a direct hindrance to naval progress, which experience, indeed, perceived and threw off, but which was, nevertheless, a hindrance as long as it lasted.

The system of rating in a regular gradation downwards seems to

* Charnock, vol. ii., p. 274.

have been common to several nations during the latter part of the seventeenth century. My chief authority, Charnock, is sometimes not quite satisfactory as to accuracy in minor matters, and I think he would be guilty of interpolating into original documents, by way of explaining them, without giving full notice that he has done so. Therefore, when he gives us, without quoting his authority, a table of the strength of the French Navy in 1681, under the head of five "rates" and four smaller groups, we are not altogether certain whether or no the rates are an interpolation. However, as given, the first rates average 90 guns, the second 72 guns, the third 53 guns, the fourth 42 guns, the fifth 30 guns; and then there are "small frigates," fire-ships, barca-longas, and pinks.*

But it may be said that navies and fleets about the time of the outbreak of the first Dutch war—that is, about the middle of the seventeenth century—pretty fairly conformed to the ideal put forward in the system of rating, and ships were built less with the view of definite duties corresponding to their size and strength, than with the view of completing the tale of each particular rate in some approach to numerical symmetry.

The British Navy stood thus on the 27th December 1653:—

1st Rates: 3 of 891 to 1,556 tons, 64 to 104 guns, and 350 to 700 men.

2nd Rates: 11 of 721 to 875 tons, 54 to 66 guns, and 260 to 400 men.

3rd Rates: 11 of 532 to 800 tons, 44 to 60 guns, and 200 to 300 men.

4th Rates: 63 of 301 to 700 tons, 28 to 50 guns, and 100 to 220 men.

5th Rates: 35 of 105 to 500 tons, 12 to 36 guns, and 30 to 200 men.

6th Rates: 9 of 55 to 255 tons, 6 to 36 guns, and 25 to 130 men.

4 fire-ships of 10 guns and 30 men.

8 victuallers of 10 to 12 guns, and 30 to 40 men.

In this list, though the mass of the ships are absorbed in the fourth and fifth rates, these rates themselves cover a very wide field, being as high as 50-gun ships, and as low as 12, pointing still more clearly towards the administrative rather than the tactical or strategical origin of the system of rating.

But this date, 1653, was one where already the experience of war had had its effect. Two years and a half before, there had been the same number of first and second rates, but only 7 third rates, and

* Charnock, vol. ii., p. 310.

20 fourth rates, and only 4 fifth rates. The result of the experience of war had been, therefore, to increase the numbers of the middle-class ships. We must remember what we have seen the nature of this war to be—namely, one where the attack and defence of a commerce which was collected in great masses formed the moving principle. It does not seem impossible to connect the increase of middle-sized ships directly with such a method of carrying on the war; but, then, I think we must allow that the fleet action, pure and simple, fell into the second place. And there was as yet little in the fleet action to cause the clear differentiation which it afterwards did.

I am not now going into the tactical question more than to trace its bearing on the differentiation of force; but it is essential that we should keep in mind that up to the end of the first Dutch war the tactics employed were of a kind that allowed all classes of ships, without distinction, to take part in a general action. We have already seen that this was so, and it is made clear to us, from the numbers of ships employed, that the whole navy on each side, ships large and small, fought together.

Sir William Monson, writing between 1635 and 1640 probably, gives us a very fair view of the tactical ideas in his earlier days, and the point at which they had arrived when he wrote; and we can see all through that there was nothing to lead the men of that day to set apart particular classes of ships for the general action. Indiscriminate numbers rather than selected types would probably have represented the idea of force in the naval mind under the circumstances.

> The strict ordering of battles by ships [says Sir William Monson] was before the invention of the bowline, for then there was no sailing but before the wind, nor no fighting but by boarding; whereas, now, a ship will sail within six points of thirty-two, and by the advantage of wind may rout any fleet that is placed in that (the half-moon) form of battle.
>
> The weather at sea is never certain, the winds variable, ships unequal in sailing; and when they strictly seek to keep their order, commonly they fall foul one of another; and in such cases they are more careful to observe their directions than to offend the enemy, whereby they will be brought into disorder amongst themselves.
>
> Suppose a fleet to be placed in the form of a half moon, or other proportion to fight, if an enemy charge them home in any of the corners of the half-moon, they will be forced to bear up room into their main battle; and there will ensue dangers and disorders of boarding one another, insomuch that it will not be possible for a general to give new directions, but every ship must fight at its will, not by command.
>
> For the avoiding of such confusion, the instructions of a general ought not to consist of many words, for the greatest advantage in a sea-fight is to get the wind of one another; for he that has the wind is out of danger of being boarded, and has the advantage where to board, and how to attempt the enemy. . . .
>
> The wind being thus gotten, a general need give no other directions than to every

admiral of a squadron to draw together their squadrons, and everyone to undertake his opposite squadron, or where he shall do it for his greatest advantage; but to be sure to take a good distance from one another, and to relieve that squadron that shall be over-charged or distressed.

Let them give warning to their ships not to venture so far as to bring themselves to leeward of the enemy; for so shall they either dishonour themselves, to see such a ship taken in their view, or in seeking to relieve her they shall bring themselves to leeward, and lose the advantage they had formerly gotten; for it will be in the power of the enemy to board them, and they not to avoid it which was the only thing coveted by the Spaniards in our time of war by reason of the advantage of their ships, as I have before expressed.*

Confirmatory of these views as to the methods of fighting which were in vogue when the first Dutch war broke out, we have the orders of the Earl of Lindsey to the captains of his fleet which he fitted out in 1635.

If we happen [he says] to descry any fleet at sea, which we may probably know or conjecture designs to oppose, encounter, or affront us, I will first strive to get the wind (if I be to leeward), and so shall the whole fleet in due order do the like, and when we come to join battle, no ship shall presume to assault the admiral, vice-admiral, or rear-admiral, but only myself, my vice-admiral, or rear-admiral, if we be able to reach them; and the other ships are to match themselves accordingly as they can, and to secure one another as cause shall require, not wasting their powder at small vessels or victuallers, nor firing till they come side to side.†

This promiscuous sort of fighting, which is fairly well exhibited in the plate in Chapter II., might take in ships of every class, and did not tend to set up any one class over any other. But the opening of the Dutch wars brought the fire-ship into prominence, and in the early battles it was a terrible weapon. But, this being so, it was only natural that some measures should be taken to reduce its power. One great source of this power was the way in which the ships during a fight were distributed in masses, for a fire-ship drifting down from to windward upon such a mass was certain to grapple some ship. Again, it was soon discovered that a promiscuous attack and defence was a very uncertain and a very unsatisfactory one. We have seen how much all the great actions in the Dutch wars partook of the character of pitched battles, and the fact must have appealed with double force to those who had the conduct of naval affairs in charge at the time.

The Dutch seem to have been earliest in devising means both to weaken the power of the fire-ships, and to bring the fleet not only under better control, but into such form as would insure the exertion of its collective power. This was the establishment of the Line as the fighting formation, and we get it in the English navy

* Monson in *Churchill's Voyages*, vol. iii., p. 320.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 297.

as early as March 31st, 1655. Probably no doubt exists to prevent us giving to Sir William Penn the full credit of commencing the great tactical revolution. We have it in the "Instructions for the better ordering of the fleet in fighting," issued at that date by Blake, Monk, Disbrowe, and Penn; but it will be seen that, though we have the Line introduced, it is done, as it were, tentatively, and without any of that conviction which gave it in after years so rigid a position in naval tactics. Article 2 says:—

At sight of the said fleet (an enemy's fleet), the vice-admiral, or he that commands in chief in the second place, and his squadron, as also the rear-admiral, or he that commands in chief in the third place, and his squadron, are to make what sail they can to come up to the admiral on each wing, the vice-admiral on the right, and the rear-admiral on the left; giving a competent distance for the admiral's squadron, if the wind will permit, and there be sea-room enough.*

Here we have the old idea of promiscuous fighting in squadrons prevailing, an idea which would admit of all classes of ships taking their share in the fight, the notion—traceable in previous quotations, and in this, so far—being that ships would seek out their matches and fight the battle out in a series of duels. But in Article 3 we have, faintly and tentatively, the new idea.

As soon as they shall see the general engage, or make a signal by firing two guns, and putting out a red flag on the fore-topmast head, that then each squadron shall take the best advantage they can to engage the enemy next to them; and, in order hereunto, all the ships of every squadron shall endeavour to keep in a line with the chief, unless the chief of their squadron be either lamed, or otherwise disabled (which God forbid), whereby the said ship which wears the flag shall not come in to do the service which is requisite. Then every ship of the said squadron shall endeavour to get in a line with the admiral, or the commander-in-chief next to him and nearest the enemy.†

These instructions formed the basis of those issued by James Duke of York when he took command of the fleet, and dated 27th April 1665.‡ These latter show the greater precision in the order of fighting, which had been at least theoretically arrived at. The second instruction changes its form, and runs:—

At sight of the said fleet, the vice-admiral (or he who commands in chief in the second place), with his squadron; and the rear-admiral (or he who commands in chief in the third squadron), with his squadron; are to make what sail they can to come up, and to put themselves into that order of battle which shall be given them; for which the signal shall be the Union flag put on the mizen peak of the admiral's ship; at sight whereof, as well the vice and rear-admirals of the red squadron, as the admirals, vice-admirals, and rear-admirals of the other squadrons, are to answer it by doing the like.

Here is, in some sort, the abandonment of promiscuous fighting.

* *Life of Sir William Penn*, vol. ii., p. 77.

† *Ibid.*

‡ I quote from the *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., app. L. There is an undoubted copy of the Duke of York's instructions in the library of the Royal U.S. Institution.

A precise order of battle is in the background, and to be put in force by signal. The third instruction runs thus :—

In case the enemy have the wind of the admiral and fleet, and they have sea-room enough, then they are to keep the wind as close as they can lie, until such time as they see an opportunity, by gaining their wakes, to divide the enemy's fleet; and if the van of His Majesty's fleet find that they have the wake of any considerable part of them, they are to tack and stand in, and strive to divide the enemy's body; and that squadron that shall pass first, being got to windward, is to bear down on those ships to leeward of them; and the middle squadron is to keep her wind, and to observe the motion of the enemy's van, which the last squadron is to second; and both of these squadrons are to do their utmost to assist or relieve the first squadron that divided the enemy's fleet.*

The other instructions which, for our present purpose, it is important to note are numbers IV., VII., and VIII. Number IV., stands thus :—

If the enemy have the wind of His Majesty's fleet, and come to fight them, the commanders of His Majesty's ships shall endeavour to put themselves in one line, close upon a wind, according to the order of battle.

Instruction VII. runs thus :—

In case His Majesty's fleet have the wind of the enemy, and that the enemy stand towards them, and they towards the enemy, then the van of His Majesty's fleet shall keep the wind; and when they are come within a convenient distance from the enemy's rear they shall stay, until their own whole line is come up within the same distance from the enemy's van; and then their whole line is to tack (every ship in his own place), and to bear down upon them so nigh as they can (without endangering their loss of wind); and to stand along with them, the same tacks abroad, still keeping the enemy to leeward, and not suffering them to tack in their van; and in case the enemy tack in the rear first, he who is in the rear of His Majesty's fleet, is to tack first, with as many ships, divisions, or squadrons, as are those of the enemy's; and if all the enemy's ships tack, their whole line is to follow, standing along with the same tacks aboard as the enemy doth.

Instruction VIII. runs :—

If the enemy stay to fight (His Majesty's fleet having the wind), the headmost squadron of His Majesty's fleet shall steer for the headmost of the enemy's ships.

It may be said of these instructions, that their spirit, if not their letter, governed the conduct of sea fights as long as they were carried out under sail. But we must not suppose that because the Line was thus set out on paper as the fighting formation, not *par excellence*, but alone, that it at once assumed its full position in fact. It was slow in accomplishing its destiny. According to Père Hoste, it was the formation taken up by both English and Dutch in the battle of the 29th of July 1653; and according to the same authority it was fully employed by the Duke of York in the

* It is strange that, with these words in existence, there should have been thought to be novelty in Clerk of Eldin's plan of "breaking the line." The author of the *Life of Penn* justly remarks upon the case.

battle off the Texel, in June 1665. But it was dropped again by Albemarle in the battle of June 1666; and by the way Sir William Penn speaks of it, it seems clear that there was still controversy as to whether a line was, or was not, the best form in which to throw a fleet for fighting purposes. Pepys reports what Penn said of the fight, a few days after its unfortunate results were made known:—"He says three things must be remedied, or else we shall be undone by this fleet. That we must fight in a line, whereas we fought promiscuously, to our utter and demonstrable ruin; the Dutch fight otherwise, and we whenever we beat them.*

So that though the line was established on paper as the fighting formation soon after the outbreak of the first Dutch war, and though it was very precisely spoken of in authoritative instructions at the beginning of the second Dutch war, it had probably not got an absolutely firm hold in the third Dutch war. The term "line of battle" does not occur in the Duke of York's instructions. It is not used by Lord Torrington in 1690, who, when he writes describing the French fleet then in sight, does not speak of "line-of-battle ships," but as ships "fit to lie in a line."†

The advantages of the line were, however, certain to give it permanence. It was, in the first place, the great defence against fire-ships; for when the fleet to leeward was drawn out in one thin line, it was comparatively easy to open out so as to let the fire-ships drift harmlessly through. I suppose that it was this fact that ultimately abolished the fire-ship as a weapon. It was at the height of its value when fleets fought in masses, as I have said; but the more certain it became that both fleets would draw out into line, the less was the hope of an effective use of the fire-ship. As I am now on the differentiation of naval force, I may as well finish with the fire-ship at once, its reign really coinciding with the date before and during the line of battle. We have seen what a prominent part the fire-ship played all through the Dutch wars, though it is not always easy to say what numbers were employed in each fleet. But in 1678 there were 6 fire-ships to a fleet of 77 rated ships. Ten years later there were 26 fire-ships to 52 rated ships ready for sea. At King William's death there were 87 fire-ships to 123 ships of the line. In 1714 there were about 50 fire-ships to about 125 sail of the line. In 1727 the fire-ship had become less

* See *Life of Penn*, vol. ii., p. 399. Two other things were mentioned.

† Entick, p 548. The earliest use I find of the term is in the *Life of Cornelius Van Tromp*, printed in 1697.

popular, as there were only 3 or 4 to 123 sail of the line. In 1741 there were fire-ships at home, in the West Indies, and in the Mediterranean, but there were only 17 to a total of 180 rated ships, 129 of which were in commission. At the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) we had but 5 fire-ships against a total of 174 rated ships. At the peace of Paris (1763) there were 8 fire-ships in commission at home to 55 sail of the line. At the peace of 1783 we have further hints of the decadence of the fire-ship, as there were only 7 then serviceable, though there were 273 rated ships afloat. After the outbreak of the revolutionary war we cease to hear of them as parts of an ordinary fleet, and at the peace of Amiens (1802) we only find 9 or 10 ships spoken of at a time when the navy contained nearly 1,000 ships of all classes. The number of fire-ships in commission during the revolutionary war was 3 only, from 1794 to 1799. Then it rose to 7 for that year and for 1800, falling again to 3 in 1801, and to 1 only in 1802. In 1804 and 1805 there was 1 fire-ship in commission, but after this they disappear altogether as an effective weapon.

The history of the fire-ship does not lack parallels in naval annals. It springs into favour as a weapon because the method of fighting in masses of ships clustered together offered peculiar facilities for its employment, but almost at once, the defence of drawing the fleets out into a long single line becoming established, the position of the fire-ship was weakened, and made a less important weapon than it had been. But the impetus it had received originally pushed it on, so that, though it was really weakened, it was held in higher estimation, and increased its numbers to a maximum at the end of William III.'s reign. Then experience begins to offer counteracting resistance to the waning impetus, and the weapon becomes gradually discredited. Yet it hangs on for years, after all thought of using it as it was originally used has passed away.

Taking the rise, progress, and fall of the fire-ship as an illustration of the differentiation of naval force, and the rules which govern it, we can recur to the line of battle and trace its effects. I have already pointed out how, in promiscuous fighting between two fleets, every class of ship was admitted, because, as there was no special order or rank of the ships, each could generally, and did generally, seek out her match and fight the battle out in a series of duels. But as soon as the single line became established, each ship had her fixed place which she could not quit, and hence, if there were great diversities in the strength of ships forming the line, the

weakest was quite likely to find herself opposite the strongest in the ensuing battle. The action of the establishment of the line-of-battle tended, therefore, in the first place, to the excision of the weaker ships from their place in the line, and to the embodiment of Lord Torrington's idea of having only "ships fit to lie in a line" —that is, of having what afterwards came to be called line-of-battle ships.

But, further, the tendency of the Line must have been to increase the power of the individual line-of-battle ship, so as to reduce the numbers, as a line of great extent would be unmanageable, and, in fact, could not be maintained as a line in view of changes of the wind. But on the other hand, the increase in the force of the individual ship would not have been carried to an extreme. The fear of putting too many eggs in one basket might always be expected to operate, and though it might not prevent the occasional building of a ship which was gigantic by comparison, it would prevent the reduction of the line-of-battle ships to a very small number of very powerful ships. But just the same causes which prolonged the life of the fire-ship beyond the period when it could be usefully employed, would tend to prevent its being seen, even through some courses of years, that the real line-of-battle ship was a medium ship, neither descending to the lowest nor ascending to the highest rank in the scale of force. The custom which had obtained in the days of promiscuous fighting of building ships of all classes, with the idea that all classes could fight side by side in the general action, might be expected to prevail long after the reason of the thing had demanded a uniform pattern line-of-battle ship of medium power.

But as the general action to be fought out in two opposing lines of ships became established, the attack and defence of commerce, which had existed before this time, called for suitable war-ships to carry it out. The establishment of the line-of-battle not only differentiated a powerful class of ships for taking part in that fighting formation, but as it excluded the smaller classes of ships from partaking in the general action it met half way the demand for special ships for looking after commerce, either by way of attack or defence.

It would appear probable that the commerce protectors or attackers would be naturally the smaller class of vessels, because, in the case of great convoys, what happened in the first Dutch war would most naturally repeat itself, and that a line-of-battle force would be employed on both sides. Where the convoy was small,

the economy of war would not permit of weakening the main line of battle for so inferior a service; and while a lighter force might serve for the attack, so would a lighter force form a sufficient defence. The mere fact that a defence by way of convoy was furnished might put aside all idea of attack. For though it might be possible to furnish inferior force to attack unguarded merchant ships, it might be difficult to withdraw from the main force enough to make itself distinctly superior to the light force which was guarding a merchant convoy. Then, too, there must always have been the two words about convoy. A large concourse of merchant-ships would make a tempting prize, which it would be worth an effort to secure; a proportionately powerful force might not safely be found to guard it. The alternative would be to break up the convoy into several sections, each under a light guard. It would be unlikely that all should be attacked, and those that were attacked, a light guard might be sufficient to defend. The general tendency on the whole would be to have a very numerous and very light set of ships, for the especial purpose of protecting their own commerce and attacking that of the enemy.

We thus get a tendency towards such a differentiation of naval force as would set apart as line-of-battle ships those specially designed to fight in a line, and to act in concert, as the main strength of the naval position; the citadel as it were of naval power; that arrangement of naval force before which every other nature of naval force must bow, and which could not be overcome but by a greater quantity of like force. The necessity for this setting apart of a special class of ships to fight in the line of battle was fully admitted in 1744, and Admiral Lestock's anonymously published pamphlet against Mathews contains language forcibly pointing to the position the line of battle had taken, and to the certainty that sooner or latter uniformity in the ships composing the line-of-battle would be established as the necessary outcome of sea-fights so conducted.

A line of battle [says the anonymous pamphleteer] is the basis and foundation of all discipline in sea-fights, and is universally practised by all nations that are masters any power at sea; it has had the test of a long experience, and stood before the stroke of time, pure and unaltered, handed down by our predecessors as the most prudential and best concerted disposition that can possibly be used at sea. This order consists in a fleet of ships being extended in a straight line either ahead or abreast one ship of another, to keep as close together as the weather will permit, that at all times every ship may be ready to sustain, relieve, or succour one another . It is directed that each ship in the line of battle shall keep within half a cable's length of one another, which is about 50 fathoms; that if His Majesty's fleet should have the wind of the enemy, the van shall steer with the van of the enemy, and there engage

them, by which means every ship knows her adversary, and from the foremost in the van to the rear, attacks them successively.*

Thus the line-of-battle promised to establish uniformity, and also that the line-of-battle ship would approach this uniformity on the lines not of ships of extreme force, for then there would be too few of them, nor yet of a very low force, for then a fleet to be strong must be too numerous to handle. This was what was before the line-of-battle ship, and yet not of early accomplishment because of the force of custom and the tradition of the promiscuous manner of fighting.

But as the line-of-battle ship was thus differentiated and parted from every other sort of war-ship, it followed that the fleet would require adjuncts in the shape of lighter ships to serve the purpose of look-outs or scouts. These ships would naturally be of much weaker force than the line-of-battle ship, for they would not take part in the fight; but they would require to be of good size so as to be able to keep company with the fleet, and so as to have a speed greater than the fleet itself in order to out-sail it and return to it in the exercise of the functions of the look-out. These duties pointed to the heavy frigate, but to a ship as far below the line-of-battle ship in force as would allow of her carrying out the special *rôle* of attending on the fleet.

Lastly, there was the much lighter attendant on commerce either by way of attack or defence, and if the practice of large convoys should fall, as it might, into disrepute, the tendency of these lighter and smaller vessels—not of the smallest size, but still low down in the scale of force—would be to grow.

This differentiation of naval force into three classes: (1) the line-of-battle ship, (2) the frigate, and (3) the light cruiser, seems to grow naturally out of the conditions of naval warfare which we have seen established; and yet judging by the progress we have seen, we should expect the differentiation to be of slow growth. It must, I think, be admitted as a fact that the naval mind is unaccustomed to project itself onward. It is so practical that it will not move until it is pushed; and thus, though I think we can clearly trace the progress of differentiation of force, it never was complete; and all we can say is that as years went on it grew nearer and nearer to the ideal, so that at the close of naval war about 1813, we get the remarkable results which will be seen.

* *A Narrative of the Proceedings of His Majesty's Fleet in the Mediterranean, and the Combined Fleets of France and Spain, from the Year 1741 to March 1744.* London, 1744.

I have already shown that in the earlier parts of the Dutch wars the differentiation was not marked. I will take as a later instance, the composition of the fleet of August 1666, commanded by Prince Rupert and the Duke of Albemarle.* That fleet stood as follows:—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
1	of 102	4	of 64	5	of 42
1	,, 90	6	,, 60	2	,, 44
2	,, 82	12	,, 58	3	,, 42
1	,, 80	1	,, 56	5	,, 40
2	,, 76	2	,, 54	4	,, 38
2	,, 72	6	,, 52	1	,, 34
2	,, 70	9	,, 50	1	,, 30
1	,, 66	14	,, 48		

Perhaps the absence of differentiation is as well marked in this fleet as it could be, but it is also well marked in a list of the whole navy drawn up by a Royal Commission in 1686.†

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
5	of 100	2	of 64	6	of 42
3	,, 96	5	,, 62	1	,, 38
10	,, 90	3	,, 60	6	,, 32
2	,, 82	9	,, 54	6	,, 30
1	,, 80	1	,, 50	2	,, 28
4	,, 72	19	,, 48	1	,, 18
28	,, 70	3	,, 46	5	,, 16
1	,, 66	1	,, 44		

Then, at the death of William III. (1702), the navy stood thus‡:—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
8	of 96 to 110	2	of 66	1	of 44
12	,, 90	1	,, 64	1	,, 40
16	,, 80	17	,, 60	28	,, 32
1	,, 74	3	,, 54	16	,, 24
2	,, 72	1	,, 53		
22	,, 70	38	,, 48		

We hardly trace any definite objects in the changes shown in the second list, the result of sixteen years' experience. There is some simplification and reduction in the number of types, a slight increase in the number of the heaviest line-of-battle ships, an

* See Charnock, vol. ii., p. 397.

† Entick, p. 534.

‡ *Schomberg's Naval Chronology*, vol. iv., p. 4.

increase in the 60-, 48-, and 32-gun ships, but we can hardly say that the real wants of the navy were being met. It is more as if opinion was swaying about, uncertain of its own aims, and acting in one way at one time and in another at another time. According to Schomberg, all the ships down to and including those of 48 guns were considered as proper to form the line of battle, but if this were so, it is only an evidence how little advance had been made in the true direction, for nothing could exceed the incongruity of so arranging a sea fight that a 48-gun ship should find herself matched against a 90-gun ship, or a 53-gun ship against a 110.

The navy of 1727 begins, in more than one way, to show the influences on differentiation of the causes enumerated. And there is besides an increased simplification in the matter of reduction in the number of types. The navy stood thus* :—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns
7 of	100	23 of	70	24 of	40
13 ,,	90	24 ,,	60	1 ,,	30
16 ,,	80	40 ,,	50	28 ,,	20

13 sloops of 4 to 10 guns.

Schomberg now excludes all ships below 50 guns from place in the line of battle, which, if he has contemporary authority to justify the statement, shows the action of causes which would raise the force of the individual line-of-battle ship and make the type uniform. Then, too, we have the exhibition of the gap between the force of the smallest line-of-battle ship, and the largest frigate, in the sudden drop of from 50 guns in the one case, to no more than 40 in the other. The admission of the new class, the Sloop, with no more than 10 guns, is a distinct effect of the causes sketched out, and certain to operate sooner or later.

We may now take the ships in commission in different parts of the world in 1741, through which we can trace still more clearly the tendencies of differentiation. At home the force in commission is stated as follows† :—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
3 of	100	7 of	70	4 of	40
6 ,,	90	2 ,,	60	15 ,,	20
10 ,,	80	13 ,,	50		

10 sloops 4 to 10 guns.

* Schomberg, vol. iv., p. 10.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 17.

In the West Indies the force was:—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
8 of	80	16 of	60	3 of	40
7 ,,	70	3 ,,	50	6 ,,	20

3 sloops of 8 guns.

In the Mediterranean we had:—

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
2 of	80	3 of	20
5 ,,	60	1 ,,	8
2 ,,	50		

In these three fleets we can in some sort discern an increase in line-of-battle ships of what might be called upper middle strength, as—counting the 50-gun ships as of the line of battle, but nothing below that—we have 57 line-of-battle ships of from 60 to 80 guns, and only nine of more than 80, and only 18 of less than 60. And also in the ships below the rank of line-of-battle ship, we only get 7 of 40 guns, that is of the heavy frigate class we have spoken of, but 38 of a much smaller class, not carrying more than 20 guns. Here is distinct approach to that differentiation which reason leads us up to when we are able to look calmly back on the naval warfare of the past and to discuss its principles. But we can note that our ancestors saw through a glass darkly, and in the struggles of constant wars established principles without pausing to identify them, and without knowing, perhaps, how much they were unconsciously guided by them.

A further illustration can be drawn from the navy as it was found in commission at the death of George II., in 1760, with its distribution on the different stations.

At Home.

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
7 of	90	10 of	64	6 of	32
2 ,,	80	2 ,,	60	5 ,,	28
24 ,,	74	3 ,,	50	3 ,,	18
2 ,,	70	1 ,,	36	11 ,,	10 to 14

In this home fleet we see quite plainly the growth of the upper middle strength of the line-of-battle ships; the widening of the gap between the weakest line-of-battle ship and the heaviest frigate; and the distinct proportionate increase in the numbers of the lighter cruisers.

In the East Indies.

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
1 of	50	1 of	28	1 of	24
1 ,,	20	2 ,,	14		

In this squadron we have the 50-gun ship passing out of the line of battle as it were, and becoming a heavy cruiser for distant and detached service. She is then accompanied not by ships in a regular descending scale, as she would have been during the period of the Dutch wars, but by a group of very much lighter cruisers, the heaviest of which has not, perhaps, half her force.

In the West Indies.

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
2 of	50	1 of	32	2 of	28
4 ,,	20	1 ,,	14		

Where the characteristics of the squadron—which was divided into two between Jamaica and the Leeward Islands—are similar to those in the East Indies.

In the Mediterranean.

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
1 of	50	1 of	32	2 of	28
1 ,,	14	1 ,,	10		

Where we have still the same thing.

In North America.

Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.	Guns.
6 of	64	15 of	32	15 of	14 to 18.
5 ,,	50	11 ,,	28	9 ,,	8 to 12.
3 ,,	44	14 ,,	20		

In this squadron there is less of the marked differentiation we are beginning to see. But if we look at the three 44-gun ships as what I may call "border ships," being almost strong enough for the line of battle and unnecessarily heavy for the duties of a frigate, we still have the three classes of line-of-battle ship, frigate, and light cruiser; the multitude of the latter being entirely in accordance with the forecast which could have been made at the date of the third Dutch war. Nothing was gained by such varieties in force as 64, 50, and 44-gun ships. A stronger line of battle could have been produced of fewer and heavier ships all of one class; and although progress towards this ideal is slow, I think the reader will now see that we are on the high way to its realisation.

The Newfoundland Squadron.

Ships.		Guns.	Ships.		Guns.
1	of	64	1	of	20
1	,,	50	5	,,	14 to 16
2	,,	28	7	,,	10 to 12.

The differentiation of force in this squadron may be seen to conform more to the approaching rule, and to assimilate to that found in the East and West India Squadrons.

We may now pass at once to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, of which the length and persistence may be supposed to have brought all the rules and principles of naval war to a climax. I have thought that the best way of exhibiting the operation of the causes we have seen at work in differentiating naval force is by using the graphic method, and exhibiting curves which show the proportions of each kind of force, and the quantities during each year from 1793. We have pretty well seen what was coming, and had our forefathers, in 1794, had before them in a clear light all the points we have been discussing, I think we may fairly assume that they would have done at first what they did at last, and so conducted the war with a greater economy.

For what is plain to be seen, I think, is, that for naval warfare not a great many types of ships are required. Whether there be or be not a line of battle, there must be some fighting formation which is under all circumstances better than any other. The fact that a form of battle is established compels a uniformity of type of ship, because form prescribes place and prevents ships seeking their match. Therefore it becomes waste to produce a few excessively powerful ships to fight in a general action, while it is a danger to allow weak ships to take part in it. In the one case the excess of power may be, most probably will be, wasted against an inferior adversary; in the other case, ships of greatly inferior force may be hopelessly beaten by those of medium or average strength.

Then I think we can see that there should be an immense fall in the strength of the strongest cruiser below that of the weakest battle-ship. It should seem also that this strongest cruiser has her place as the eyes of the fleet, even as set forth by James Duke of York in his instructions. Then would come another heavy fall in the strength of the light cruiser, of which the special function is guarding our own commerce and attacking that of the enemy. I do not see that anything is gained by great variety in type. There is always the consideration present that there is no guarantee that even with the infinite variety of type, such as we see com-

posed our navy in 1686, the particular ship most suited to the service will be where time and place requires her. Much more likely is it that the wrong types will be everywhere. In one case the ships available will be too weak, and risks will be run; in another case the ships available will be too strong, and money will be wasted.

These thoughts spring from our study of the nature of naval war as far as we have carried it. I offer circumstantial evidence of their correctness in the growth of differentiation as we have traced it, best seen above all, in Plates I., II., III.

Plate I. shows us the nature of the whole navy in commission, year by year, from 1793 till 1813. It impresses on us two points; the

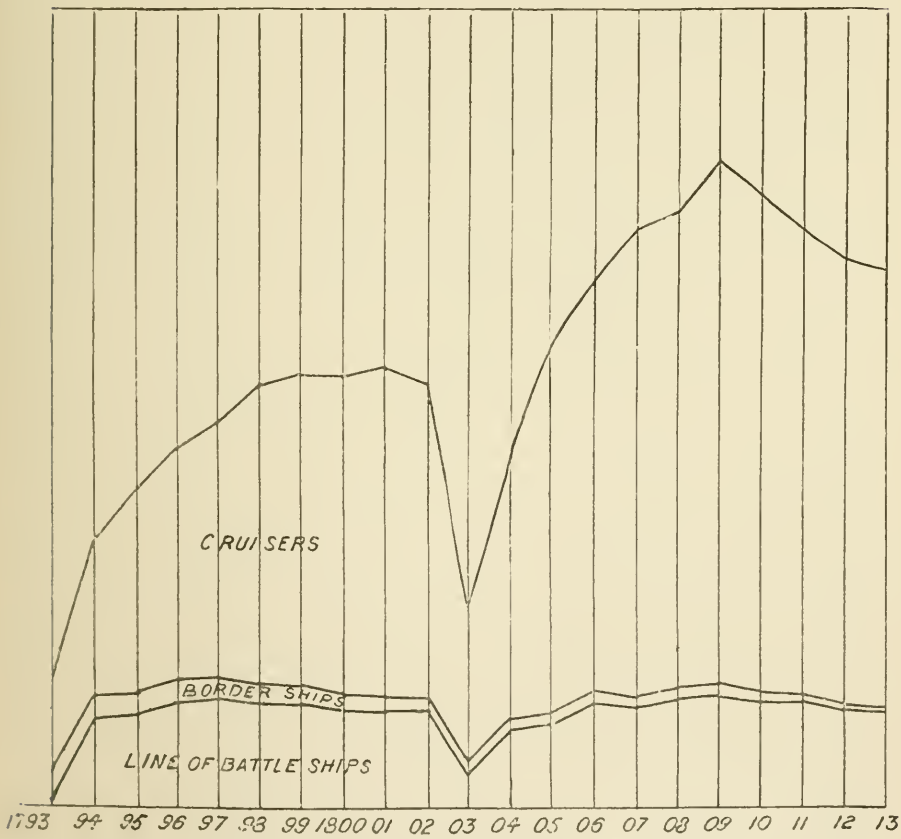


PLATE I.—SHIPS IN COMMISSION FROM 1793 TO 1813.

Vertical scale for numbers of each class.

50 100 200 300 400 500

gradual elimination of what I call the "border ships," the ships that were and were not line-of-battle ships. There is evidence enough that the navy did not like them; they came steadily down from the Dutch days of promiscuous fighting, and we had continued to produce them because our fathers had done so. Custom went on with them as an essential part of naval force until about 1796, but the practical experience of war eliminated them. They were found in constantly diminishing numbers year by year, when they closed at a minimum in 1813.

This plate also exhibits in a striking manner the way in which the pressure of war experience demanded increase in the number of cruisers. The line-of-battle force once established in superority required no further increase. But the demand for increase of cruisers, nearly all of which were engaged in the attack of the enemy's commerce and the defence of our own, sprang up immediately, rose to a great height during the Revolutionary war, but sprang to its greatest and almost fabulous height when our line-of-battle strength was unimpeached in any part of the world.

Plate II. gives us, with great force and clearness, the interior changes in the line-of-battle force and its differentiation. We have seen it coming, no doubt, through what has before been said, yet the precision of the result has in it the nature of a surprise when plotted out in such a plate.

From the year 1793 to 1796 the tendency would almost seem to belie teaching, and to reverse the processes which had gone on in former wars. Up to 1796 there was an increase of each class of line-of-battle ships, that is to say, a swinging off from the uniformity which reason would have pronounced for, and in 1796, there were in commission 22 ships of from 90 to 120 guns; 5 of 80 guns, 54 of 74, 24 of 64, and 25 border ships of from 44 to 56 guns on two decks. This was really an approach to the old thing, and an advance in an altogether wrong direction, if the subject were to be reasoned out. But no sooner was this point reached than the reason of the case—still, possibly, without consciousness—began to prevail. By 1801, the border ships had fallen to 15, the heaviest types of the line-of-battle ships, those from 80 to 120 guns had diminished by 4. The 64's on the otherside had diminished in number by 4, while the 74's had increased by 4. Practically the Napoleonic war was simply a development of right reason, stimulated by the spur of experience. The heavy and the light line-of-battle ships continually diminished in number, while the upper middle rank of that class of ship, the 74, continually

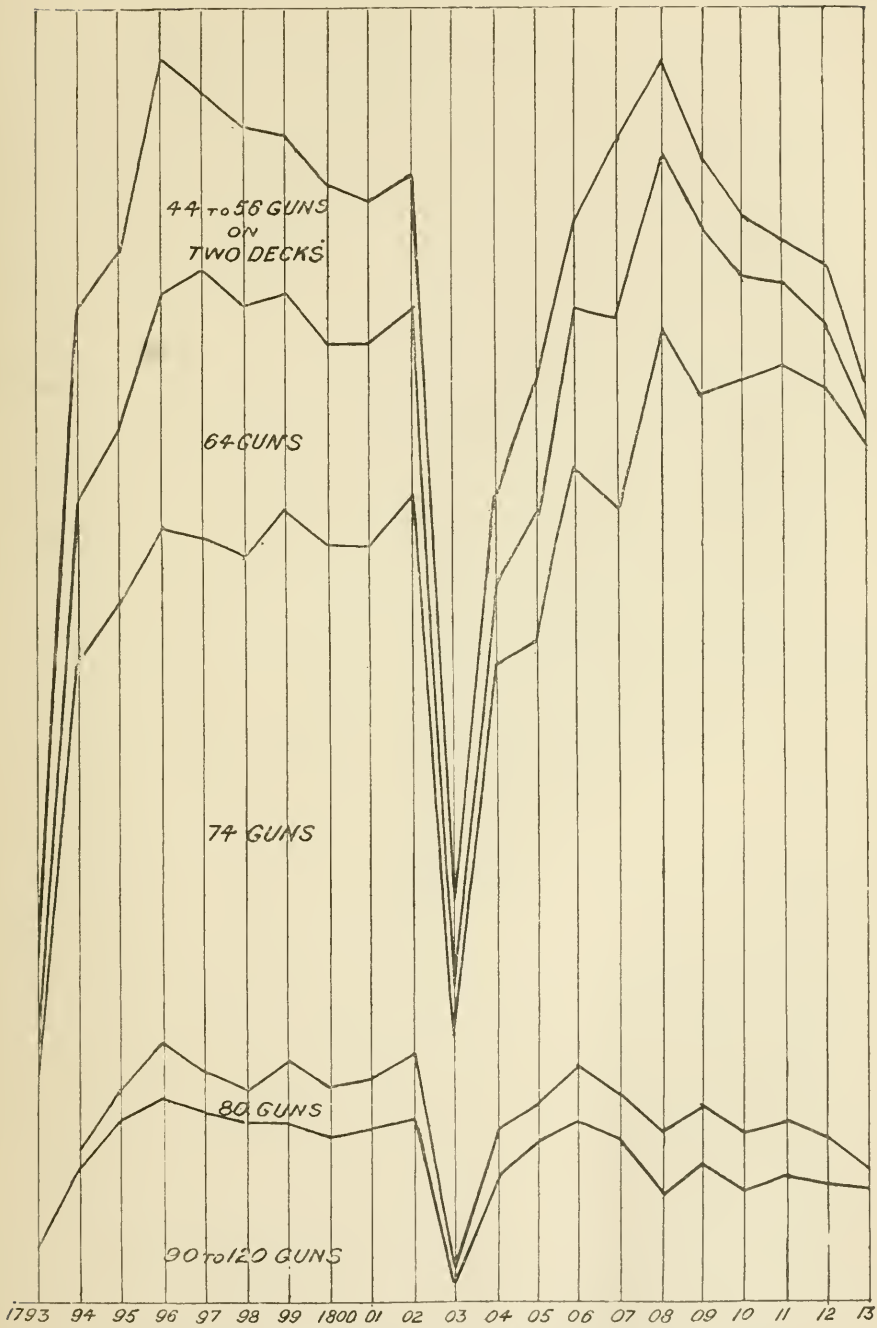


PLATE II.—LINE-OF-BATTLE SHIPS IN COMMISSION FROM 1793 TO 1813.

Vertical scale for numbers of each class.

5 10 20 30 40 50

increased. When the naval war practically came to an end in 1813, the 74 occupied almost the whole field. The border ships and the 64's had practically disappeared on the one side, there being but 4 of the former, and 2 of the latter. On the other side, the heavy line-of-battle ships of 80 guns and upwards had dwindled to a minimum, there being but 14 of them in commission. Their function was less a question of force than of accommodation, and the chief reason for their existence was the space they afforded to the admiral and his staff. But the 74's were no less than 85 in number, and if we regard the tendency of the curves as drawn, it is not too much to suppose that a continuance of the war would have seen the line of battle reach its ideal, and beheld it composed of a single type of ship, that ship being of the upper middle class.

Plate III. does for the cruisers what Plate II. has done for the line-of-battle ships; it shows their growing interior differentiation. And here, in observing that the tables are all prepared from the elaborate "Abstracts" furnished by James in his naval history, we must note that James does not make the clear distinction between ships of the line and cruisers till the year 1803. It is as if the absolute wall which ought to exist between the two classes of ships and their function, had not struck him at an earlier part of his work. This, again, was a portion of the ancient inheritance, the ideal of promiscuous fighting, which these plates show to have been so utterly swept away in the long sea wars with France and Spain.

In Plate III. we can trace all the general tendencies of differentiation amongst the cruisers with great ease. Just as the weaker line-of-battle ship is seen to disappear gradually, carrying with it the border ship, so does the very heavy frigate of 40 to 44 guns, never very numerous, give place so as to increase and emphasize the impassable gap which separates the battle-ship from the cruiser. But when the gap is marked enough, that class of cruiser which should be specially the attendant on the fleet, and which is nearest to the gap, begins to grow. All through both wars there is a tendency in the 38- and 36-gun frigates to aggrandise and swell in their position. In the year 1809, when our navy reached its maximum force, there were 44 38-gun, and 36 36-gun frigates in commission, and next year they reached their highest development, there being 48 38-gun, and 49 36-gun frigates.

But side by side with this growth was the diminution in the number of ships carrying from 20 to 32 guns. While the proportion of these lighter frigates to the heavier had been in 1798, 74

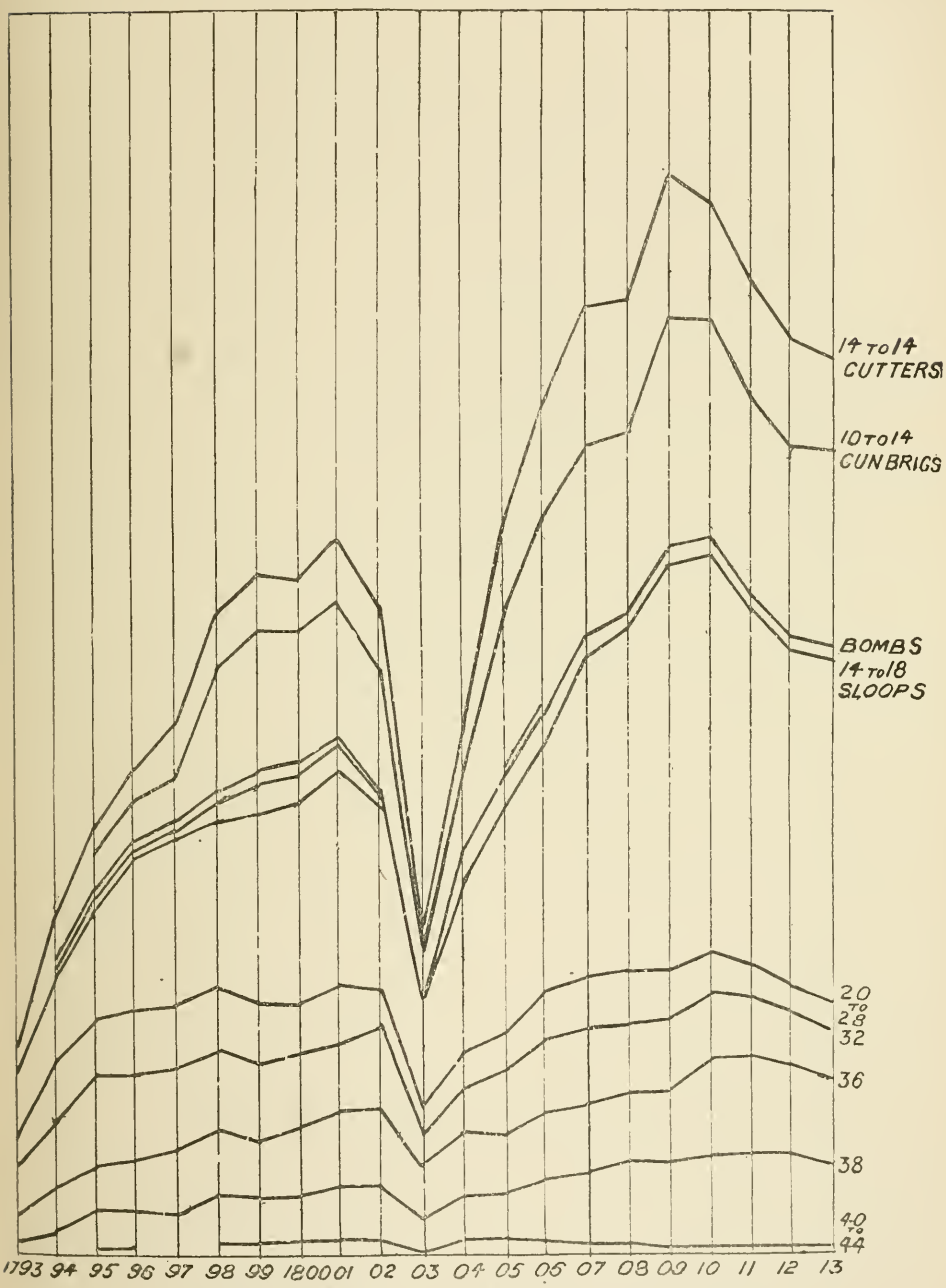


PLATE III.—CRUISERS IN COMMISSION FROM 1793 TO 1813.

N.B.—The line which extends part of the way above the bombs represents fire-ships.

Vertical scale for numbers of each class.

25 50 100 150 200 250

to 55, in 1810 it had altered to 54 to 97, and in 1813 to 38 to 86. That is to say, that just as the gap between the line-of-battle ship and the frigate had distinctly established itself, so was the natural and proper gap between the frigate and the light cruiser in course of establishing itself. And then, as to these light cruisers, Plate III. shows us that it was there that the enormous increase in our navy took place.

In 1809 the cruisers of 20 guns and over in commission numbered 147, but, excluding bombs and special ships, the cruisers carrying less than 20 guns numbered no less than 403. And if we are to judge by the curves exhibited, there was from the first a continued demand for the services of these vessels, a demand which did not cease till the enormous total just given was reached. After 1809–10 we may presume that we had not only secured the command of the sea by the impregnable front of our line of battle, but we had everywhere so overspread the sea with these light cruisers that our own commerce threaded a safe way through them; the enemy's commerce could not show, and so great were the risks, that the attempts upon our own commerce collapsed.

I have now traced the differentiation of naval force through all its changes in England, and I think a case is made out to show that the state of the classes of ships continually developing, and brought nearly to complete perfection at the close of the Napoleonic war, is a permanent one; that it is of the essence of naval war that there should be battle-ships of uniform type, neither the most powerful that can be produced nor yet greatly below that type; that there should then be a class of ships altogether incapable of facing a battle-ship in fight, and in no way armed to attempt it, but of substantial character, with speed in a sea-way, the chief duties of which would be attendance on the fleet. There appears no reason in what has here been discussed why this type also should not be uniform. Then it looks as if the next type might fall to a great inferiority below the class just mentioned, but should make up for its individual weakness by its number.

The Crimean war was hardly a naval one; and if it had been otherwise, the changes from sail to steam, and from the paddle to the screw, both of which it brought to a head, would vitiate the results of any continuation of the statistics for that period; but it is not unworthy of remark that the war followed the example of Table III. in producing 155 small steamers, gun-boats, a class unknown before.

CHAPTER VI.

Attempts to gain the Command of the Sea with Definite Ulterior Purpose.

There is a difference between attempting to gain the command of the sea as an end, and as a means for achieving some ulterior purpose.—The best examples are the Dutch wars on one side, and the various attempts of France to invade England on the other.—But invasions are at least rarely planned in the absence of command of the sea, unless help is hoped for within the country to be invaded.—The transactions of 1690 show that partial command of the sea will not permit invasion, and that a partially beaten fleet is still to be reckoned with in such operations.—The transactions of 1692 show the difficulties of the attempts, and of the great risks that are run in seeking for a temporary command of the sea.

There being no example of the attempt to secure the command of the sea as an end so complete as that of the Anglo-Dutch wars, I traced pretty fully their history, and drew special attention to the methods employed on both sides. It is important to remember that in these wars there was no ulterior object in the aims either of Dutch or English. Both nations depended largely on sea-borne commerce for their prosperity, and if one nation should succeed in obtaining such a command of the sea as would enable it to control the commerce of the other, the latter would certainly be brought to her knees. Holland was so well aware of this, that in the second and third wars she felt it necessary to temporarily suspend her commerce, in order the more freely to contend for the direct command of the sea, or at least to prevent England from obtaining such a command as might give her a permanent control over the Dutch commerce. Her policy was so far successful that she did prevent the command of the sea being thoroughly gained against her, and shortened the wars by the firm and resisting front which she was ever able to show.

But we have seen that both nations were desirous of pushing

the war off the sea, whenever even temporary command of it promised to permit the attempt. Troops were embarked at different times by both nations, and were actually landed by the Dutch when a mistaken policy on the English part allowed the Dutch sufficient command of the sea to undertake it. It is true that on neither side of the North Sea did the idea of operations on land extend beyond harrying, alarming, and destroying, within the immediate neighbourhood of the coast. But supposing the command of the sea had been absolutely in the hands of one side, and that that did not suffice to obtain the terms demanded, it is conceivable that the side in power might have aimed at more permanent occupation of the enemy's territory, resting on the sea base for supplies. If the population of one nation had been greatly in excess of the other, and its land forces proportionately stronger, the ultimate aim of this nation might have been a military expedition. Conquest of territory might have been the aim of the war, and the command of the sea might have been looked at not as the end, but only as the means to an end. Conceivably, if the military power were immensely greater on one side than on the other, the more powerful nation might hope to end the war by that sort of sudden conquest, which, when undertaken on a large scale, is called invasion, and this without much care as to the permanent command of the sea. The attempt might even go further; the idea might be that the greatness of the force, and the suddenness of its landing, might achieve conquest, and conclude the war with such speed as to render sea communications unnecessary and therefore to leave out of question the command of the sea even for a time, the invasion being conducted by way of surprise or evasion.

There are not wanting examples of this kind of operation, or attempted operation. The Spanish Armada, Hoche's expedition to Bantry, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, and the Italian attack on the Island of Lissa are all cases in point, though not encouraging in their results, as to that particular method of conducting war. I shall have to treat of these and other operations of like nature in subsequent chapters, but I only advert to them to make clear the distinction which exists between that form of operation and the one of which I am about to treat. This is the case where the naval and the military operations are separate, and where a purely naval war, however short it may be, is carried on simply to clear the way for the military operation which is to follow.

The operation is nearer akin to that which will also require to

be investigated, where a power having already the command of the sea, and intending a military expedition for the success of which command of the sea is necessary, sets apart a naval force to mask the naval force of the enemy, and, therefore, to make assurance doubly sure.

There are no more perfect illustrations of the operations I have in view than the several great endeavours of France to secure the command of the sea, in order to pass across the Channel a military force large enough to effect the conquest of the country before sufficient time had elapsed to change again the face of the naval supremacy.

But I think it should be observed that in every case of invasion, either of this kind or of the kind above spoken of, the invading power hoped for assistance in the country invaded. In one case, that of the invasion of the Prince of Orange, the certainty of help in the invaded country was so complete, and the doubt of possible naval opposition so marked, that we must almost leave it out of any class of naval operations possible to be formed. The balance of political opinion, far more than of force, either naval or military, determined the conduct of the design. But it may be taken as the extreme type of invasion, and as differing from other invasions more in degree than in kind. In every one of the French attempts on England, France believed that the landing of her troops would be the signal for insurrections in her favour all over the country, and of a great rallying to her standard of a disaffected population. In her attempts on Ireland, it was the same. In the case of Spain, Philip was confident that a vast body of oppressed Catholics would support him as soon as his troops disembarked, and was only depending on that help coming to him on a large scale which in the landing at Kinsale his troops received on a small scale. Even in Egypt and the East the fanaticism of the French led them to suppose they would be received as friends and deliverers, and would find a home and a base for further operations against the English possessions in the East, even in the very probable contingency of being cut off from France.

Certainly this view, that the French troops, if they succeeded in landing on the English shores, would be sufficiently supported by the people to effect the intended purpose of restoring James to his throne, completely governed the operations which led to the abortive battle of Beachy Head.

A considerable French army had been landed in Ireland, and the ex-king James had gained such power there that large forces

had departed from England to make head against him, William himself quitting the country on the 11th June 1690 to take the head of his army in Ireland. England itself was, therefore, left to the government of Mary as Regent, and to a military defence of which the chief strength was a hastily called-out militia. The naval defence was so backward, and so much delayed, that Lord Torrington, that Admiral Herbert who had escorted King William to Torbay, had resigned his office at the Admiralty sooner than be a party to the unpreparedness for events by sea which was then the uppermost policy.* Nottingham, the Secretary of State and Torrington's enemy, was able to overrule prudent counsels, and by despising the French as an enemy at sea, really left the country open to grave dangers.

The French were no doubt well informed, through James's partisans, of the opportunity that was opening to them. They had a full belief that, in the absence of William and the English army in Ireland, a success in the Channel which would enable them to carry a small military force across would bring about a general rising and restore the ex-King. Indeed, arrangements had gone so far as to fix the 18th of June as the date for the outbreak of the insurrection.

The French intention was then to appear in the Channel in greatly superior force to any that the English and Dutch were likely to produce. A part of the fleet was to make for the Thames to support the Jacobite rising in the capital; while the other part was to join the galleys, and land 8,000 men in Torbay with arms for a much greater number. After so landing them, this part of the fleet was to sail into the Irish Sea and prevent the return of King William and his troops.†

The main body of the French assembled at Brest under the command of Vice-Admiral Comte de Tourville, and the ships at Toulon under the orders of Vice-Admiral Châteaurenault were ordered to join him.

* "Lest any of these matters should be laid to my charge, I think it necessary to acquaint this honourable court that not seeing matters so well in the Admiralty as I thought the service required, and that it was not in my power to prevent it, I humbly begged and obtained the King's leave to be dismissed from that commission and giving any further attendance at that Board; that since I could not prevent the mischief, I might have no share in the blame." Torrington's defence, quoted by Entick, p. 548. His quitting of the Board, and being succeeded by the Earl of Pembroke, took place January 20th, 1689, according to Schomberg's *Naval Chronology*, vol. v., p. 191, but this must be a mistake for 1790.

† Lediard, vol. ii., p. 634.

On the English side, the fitting out of a suitable fleet was not only delayed but postponed; but some slight comprehension of the danger was shown in the orders which had been given to Vice-Admiral Killigrew in the early spring. This officer sailed from Torbay with a squadron and convoy for the Mediterranean on the 7th of March, making first for Cadiz. He had with him one second-rate, four third-rates, seven fourth-rates, one fifth-rate, and two fire-ships, besides apparently four Dutch ships, two of which unfortunately foundered on the way out. According to the reckoning of those days, this gave Killigrew, when he sailed, sixteen ships "fit to lie in a line." His orders were to proceed to Cadiz, and to forward the trade to its different destinations up the Mediterranean, and then with the remainder of his squadron, which would be seven ships and the Dutch, to watch the motions of the Toulon fleet, and if it passed the Straits of Gibraltar westward, he was to follow it.

He was much delayed in every way; took the usual month, which a century later was still the usual month, to reach Cadiz, but there was considerably hampered by the hindrances placed in his way by the Spanish authorities. He was still there with most of his ships on the 9th of May when expresses reached him from several quarters that the Toulon fleet of ten sail, three of them carrying 80 guns each, had been seen off Alicante, Malaga, and Gibraltar successively. Killigrew sailed next morning for Gibraltar, where he not only picked up the rest of his ships, but heard that fourteen ships, presumably the French squadron, had been seen at anchor in the Bay of Tetuan near Ceuta, and just opposite Gibraltar, the night before. He at once made for this point, having with him ten sail of English, "fit to lie in a line," beside two fifth-rates and two fire-ships, as well as five Dutch ships.

None of the French fleet were found at anchor, but in a short time they were all seen to the northward, and sail was made in chase. The French and English historians have squabbled a good deal over whether either side was willing or unwilling for an encounter. Presumably, Châteaurenault would have shown a singular want of sense had he courted a battle, which might have prevented that great concentration of force which he was about to complete at Brest. Anyhow, there was no action. The French passed the Straits, and Killigrew, having apparently little comprehension of the French strategy, or of the possibly momentous results of his delay, proceeded to Cadiz, and busied himself in arranging for convoys and such like matters of inferior import.

He had been ordered to follow the French if they passed the Straits; he certainly obeyed his orders, but so leisurely that when he reached Plymouth Sound, after the 30th of June, it was only to learn that Torrington had been beaten, that the French were in command, though not in undisputed command, of the Channel, and that it behoved him to get his very inferior force right up into Hamoaze, and out of harm's way, with as little delay as might be.

Beside the main force of the English and Dutch, slowly—very slowly—assembling at St. Helens, and this force of Killigrew's, which I have traced out and home, the only other English force of importance was that under Sir Cloudesley Shovel, which, however, had only amounted to six men-of-war under his immediate command when De Tourville's preparations were complete.*

As to the main fleet, I have already spoken of its delay. Of the fact of this delay, there is but little doubt. As to the causes, they seem to have been a point for bitter argument between the navy and the politicians. Torrington's defence makes it quite clear that he had been urging all through the winter the necessity of hastening and increasing the preparations, and had been as steadily withstood by the Earl of Nottingham. "I appeal to him," said the prisoner on his trial, "whether I did not tell him, when I had urged many reasons for strengthening our fleet, which he only answered with, 'You will be strong enough for the French,' 'My Lord, I know my business, and will do my best with what I have; but pray remember it is not my fault that the fleet is no stronger. I own I am afraid now, in winter, whilst the danger may be remedied; and you will be afraid in summer, when it is past remedy."† Burnett accuses Torrington of being "a man of pleasure," and that he delayed joining the fleet. It seems impossible that this can be true, for Torrington in his defence expressly charges some of the wrongdoings on the fact that he did not join the fleet till the 30th May.‡ As the court-martial honourably acquitted Lord Torrington, and as the King made it extremely hard for all who had defended him, it seems pretty clear what the navy of the day thought about it all, and what view the politicians took.

However, the result of all was that on the 23rd June 1690

* Ships at Plymouth are also mentioned, but I have no account of their number or force.

† Entick, p. 548.

‡ Burnett, however, had but a hazy notion of anything that took place. He evidently thinks our ships assembled at Plymouth, whereas they assembled in the Downs, and Torrington found them there. See *Memoirs of Lord Torrington* (then Captain Byng, in command of the *Hope*, 70), p. 43. Torrington in his defence states that his orders were not signed till the 26th May. Entick, p. 550.

Torrington found himself at St. Helen's at the head of no more than 50 men-of-war and 20 fire-ships in the face of a sudden announcement that the French, 120 strong, were at the back of the Isle of Wight.

The Comte de Tourville at Brest, being joined by the Toulon fleet which Killigrew had failed to follow, found himself at the head of 70 ships fit for the line, 5 frigates, 16 fire-ships, and 15 galleys. He was totally unwatched, as one of the clever things the Regency had done, and for which it blamed its subordinate, the Commander-in-Chief, was absolutely and entirely to omit the making of any attempt to gain intelligence. Not a cruiser watched the port of Brest, not a cutter even guarded the approaches to the Channel.

"All very well," said Torrington, "to blame me for this."

Some think that in some measure I am chargeable with it. Surely they do not mean before I came to the fleet, which was not till the 30th of May! And from that time forward we had always ships at sea, not only as scouts, but some ever upon the coast of France. It is said, we had no scouts out when the French appeared, and it is very true; nor is it my fault. For all our ships' boats being employed to fetch the Earl of Pembroke's regiment, I desired the Dutch, who had the outguard, to take that care upon them; and it seems those that Vice-Admiral Callemberg had appointed for that service delayed it, to take in some necessaries at the Isle of Wight. And it is certain that the first notice I had of the French was by the appearance of five of their scouts.

I thought, and still think, that the material intelligence is the strength of an enemy's preparation and how that is to be employed. If we had any such intelligence it has been concealed from me; for the first notice I had of Monsieur de Chatteau Renaut's joining the French fleet, was the sight of his flag flying off the Isle of Wight.*

Châteaurenault, as we have seen, had been able to evade Killigrew, who had not followed him up as he should have done, and he had consequently been able to form his junction with de Tourville unnoticed and unmolested. † The Comte de Tourville consequently was able to sail from Brest on the 13th June at the head of the force mentioned, ‡ and he proceeded at once for the Isle of Wight.

* Entick, p. 548.

† One of the reasons given why Killigrew was unable to bring him to action was the foulness of his ships' bottoms. They had been seventeen months "off the ground," whereas the Frenchmen were just out of Toulon "clean."

‡ In reference to the last chapter, it may be useful to give the exact force of the ships in the line:—

110 guns	-	-	-	1	74 guns	-	-	-	2	58 guns	-	-	-	6
104 ,,	-	-	-	1	72 ,,	-	-	-	1	56 ,,	-	-	-	1
90 ,,	-	-	-	2	70 ,,	-	-	-	1	54 ,,	-	-	-	3
86 ,,	-	-	-	2	68 ,,	-	-	-	5	52 ,,	-	-	-	3
84 ,,	-	-	-	2	66 ,,	-	-	-	1	50 ,,	-	-	-	2
80 ,,	-	-	-	7	64 ,,	-	-	-	1	44 ,,	-	-	-	1
76 ,,	-	-	-	2	62 ,,	-	-	-	9	40 ,,	-	-	-	1
					60 ,,	-	-	-	11					

However startling it may have been for an admiral lying at St. Helen's to learn, after hardly any warning, that an enemy's fleet of 120 sail, twice his strength at least, was quietly at anchor in Freshwater Bay, Lord Torrington does not seem to have lost his head for a moment. A profound strategist as well as a most experienced seaman, he saw exactly how the land lay, and at once proposed to make the best of the very bad job which the neglect of his advice and warnings had led up to. He had had on the 22nd of June his earliest intimation that the French had put to sea for the eastward; and now, at 8 o'clock in the morning on this 23rd, he received the astounding intelligence above noted. He at once weighed, but the wind was so light as to leave his fleet chiefly at the mercy of the tides, and being no further than off Dunose he wrote to Lord Nottingham :—

We sailed this morning, but the wind taking us short we are not far from Donose. If the French have continued their station, we are not above five leagues asunder. Our fleet consists of 50 men-of-war, and 20 fire-ships; the odds are great, and you know it is not my fault. To-morrow will probably be the deciding day. Let them tremble at the consequence whose fault it was the fleet is no stronger; for my part, I will, with God Almighty's help, do my duty, and I hope everybody here will do so too. If we are to expect any more Dutch, I hope they will be hastened to us; it is not impossible they may come time enough for a share, because the sea is subject to accidents. We have as yet but 18 Dutch with us, after all De Witt's great promises.

The lightness of the wind compelled the Admiral to anchor for the night off Dunose, and next day was reinforced by three Dutch and two English men-of-war. At daylight on the 25th Torrington weighed with his 55 sail to a light N.E. wind, and with the intention of bringing the French to battle if possible, but it became so thick that he had to anchor again; but presently, the wind shifting to the S.W., it cleared, and then he saw the French about twelve miles to the S.W., in a line on the port tack, standing, that is, to the W.N.W. Torrington weighed, and forming his line stood to the S.S.E. on the starboard tack, the French thus growing more and more on their starboard beam as they advanced; being also to windward, and having therefore full opportunity of bringing on a general action, which their undoubtedly great superiority of force justified, nay urged, them in doing. I need not particularize in this place the movements of the respective fleets, beyond establishing the point, distinctly stated by Lord Torrington, that the French might have brought him to action on this 25th of June,

Showing that though the necessary differentiation of force was approaching, the French idea was yet a long way from understanding what a "line-of-battle" ship really meant. —*See* O. Troude, vol. i. p. 198.

and did not.* But on this day Lord Torrington got near enough to observe with his own eyes the strength of the French force, and even to count the ships with some approach to accuracy. The prospect was not reassuring for an Admiral who knew that there were no reserves behind him, and that his country was divided against itself. The two fleets anchored for the night, and on the morning of the 26th Lord Torrington wrote to Nottingham as follows:—

It is unaccountable why the French shunned us: for though they had many ships to leeward, and scattered, they had enough in a body to have given us more than sufficient work. I do acknowledge my first attention of attacking them a rashness that will admit of no better excuse than that, though I did believe them stronger than we are, I did not believe it to so great a degree. I find by their manner of working, that notwithstanding their strength, they act with some caution, and seem to be willing to add to the advantage of force that of wind too. Their great strength and caution have put soberer thoughts into my head, and have made me very heartily give God thanks they declined the battle yesterday. And, indeed, I shall not think myself very unhappy if I can get rid of them without fighting, unless it may be upon equaller terms than for the present I see any prospect of. I find I am not the only man of that opinion, for a Council of War I called this morning unanimously agreed we are by all manner of means to shun fighting with them, especially if they have the wind of us, and retire, if we cannot avoid it otherwise, even to the Gunfleet, the only place we can with any manner of probability make our party good with them in the condition we are in.† We have now had a pretty good view of their fleet, which consists of near, if not quite, 80 men-of-war, fit to lie in a line, and 30 fire-ships, a strength that puts me beside the hopes of success, if we should fight, and really may not only endanger the losing of the fleet, but at least the quiet of our country too; for if we are beaten, they being absolute matters of the sea, will be at great liberty of doing many things they dare not attempt whilst we observe them, and are in a possibility of joining Vice-Admiral Killigrew and our ships to the westward. If I find a possibility, I will get by them to the westward to join those ships; if not, I mean to follow the result of the council of war. In the meantime, I wish there might be speedy orders given to fit out with speed whatever ships of war are in the river of Chatham, and that the ships to the westward proceed to Portsmouth, and from thence, if the French come before the river, they may join us over the flats. This is the best advice I can give at present;

* Sometimes there is nothing more puzzling than to make out, from the accounts of historians, what fleets actually did. In this case Lediard and Entick have followed Burchett, not perceiving that Torrington's statements do not agree with their own vague ones. Berkeley gives a mere paragraph to the whole thing. The author of the MS. Memoirs of Lord Torrington (Byng), now printed by the Camden Society and edited by Professor Laughton, distinctly states that when Torrington (Herbert) sighted the French fleet they were to leeward of him, and then "drawing into a line of battle," he "bore down upon them." But this neither agrees with the wind as given by Lord Torrington in his letter, nor with the movements he described himself to have made. Speaker Onslow, in a note on Burnett's *History of his own Times*, says—speaking presumably of these Memoirs—that they give the best account of the battle of Beachey Head which he had seen.

† The Gunfleet is a bank running out from Foulness, north of the Thames, in an E.N.E. direction, in part covering Harwich, and affording anchorage to a large fleet behind it.

but had I been believed in winter, the kingdom had not received this insult. Your Lordship now knows the opinion of the flag-officers of both Dutch and English fleets, which I desire you will lay before Her Majesty, and to assure her that if she has other considerations, whenever she pleases to signify her pleasure, her commands shall be punctually obeyed, let the consequence be what it will.*

Nothing could be plainer or more straightforward than this cool exposition of the situation. As far as he could see, he was, with a force 55 men-of-war, opposed to a force of 80; and though if it were the mere winning or losing of a battle, the risk of one might be properly run, yet, considering what was behind—the army over in Ireland with the King, a large disaffected population ready to welcome the French, the considerable detachments of naval force, under Killigrew and under Cloudesley Shovel, open to annihilation—the risk of being beaten became disproportionably great. While if he could altogther avoid fighting, and merely wait and watch, he would render the great French armament powerless, and entirely defeat its ends. It could do absolutely nothing if Torrington declined to be drawn into a battle, because the moment it attempted anything by way of a landing, or an attack upon the shore, it would give to the British admiral exactly that advantage which was required to made his attack successful.

But his letter makes it perfectly clear that he proposed to abandon nothing, unless he was forced to do so. He was ready, rather than risk a battle at such immense disadvantage, even to retire behind the Gunfleet. For there, amongst the shoals, his fleet was secure; and while he was there, the very utmost the French could do would be to lie off the Thames and blockade it. But their inability to thread the intricate navigation of the entrance to the river was the very circumstance which would enable reinforcements to reach him "over the flats." In his mind, the Gunfleet shoal was to do for him just what, more than a century later, the Duke of Wellington rightly calculated that the lines of Torres Vedras would do for him.

Short-sighted people in 1690 and in 1810 thought just in the same way. To them, a retirement behind the Gunfleet was an abandonment of the country to the Allies of the ex-King; and the retreat upon Lisbon was to give up Portugal to the French.

But Torrington had no intention of making for the Gunfleet except in the last resort. If he could win past the French fleet to the westward, he might pick up Killigrew and Shovel, and then returning with his augmented force, he would be able to deal satisfactorily with de Tourville, who was just as much prevented

* Entick, p. 548.

from meddling with the shore when Torrington was west as when he was east of him. The plan then was (1) at all hazards to avoid fighting with the odds so greatly against him; (2) to endeavour to pass the French to the westward; and (3) if this could not be accomplished, and the French forced him to the eastward, then he would secure himself finally behind the Gunfleet, where it was difficult to attack him at an advantage, but whence he could issue at any moment, and therefore could hold the French completely in check. Where also he could be reinforced until strong enough to take the offensive.

Nottingham, at the elbow of the Queen, either could not or would not understand anything of this. "Sir William Jennings,"* he wrote to Torrington, "is on board of the French Admiral, and examined some prisoners (whom they took off of Weymouth, and set on shore in the Isle of Wight) what the number of our fleet was; and they saying 90 sail of men-of-war, he was in a great rage, and threatened to hang them for lying, for that he was sure we had but 30 ships together; for the Dutch were not come, Killigrew in the Straits, and Shovel in the Irish seas; and that they came to destroy our fleet thus divided, first at Portsmouth, and then in the river. And they were extremely discouraged upon hearing the salutes, when they were told that it must be upon the arrival of the Dutch ships.† And we have further information that they are very ill manned. And though your lordship, that has seen them, may better judge of their number than we can by any advice from France, yet I have seen letters from one who, in company with others, was very near their fleet; and they all say, that they counted them twelve times, and could never make them more than 103 or 104 of all rates; of which they say positively there was not about 60 ships that could stand in a line."‡

The ships from Plymouth [Nottingham continues] sailed thence on Monday morning last, so that if they are not already with you they must be very near.

Sir Cloudesley Shovel sailed from Belfast at three of the clock in the morning of the 18th instant, so that he also cannot be far from you.

* One of James's adherents.

† Not impossibly it was this information reaching the French, and the hearing the salutes on the 24th, which disinclined them from coming to action on the 25th of June. It will have been observed that Torrington failed to count the French accurately, and somewhat over-rated their force. The French, perhaps, failed in the same way, proximity not being close enough for accurate counting.

‡ This, it will be observed, was as much under-counting as Torrington's over-counting. There were certainly 70 ships fit for the line, and if the galleys were then with them, which, however, I doubt, there were 106 sail all told. Torrington might easily have been deceived if the 15 galleys, the 5 frigates, and the 16 fire-ships were all present.

By letters from Vice-Admiral Killigrew, dated May 26th from Cadiz, I find he intended to sail in a few days, and return according to his orders.

So that upon the whole, if you should retire to the Gunfleet, the ships from Plymouth, if not joined with you and Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and all the ships returning from Ireland, and Vice-Admiral Killigrew, with that squadron and a rich fleet of merchantmen, will all be exposed to inevitable ruin. And besides, the French may have opportunity of going with their whole fleet, or sending such part as they may think fit to Scotland, where they are expected; and we have too good reason to apprehend disturbances.*

This would be a perverse enough misunderstanding of the situation, and of Torrington's view of it, if it stood alone. But the *non-sequitur* of the enclosure almost takes one's breath away. Nottingham was in the main only repeating what Torrington had put in his mind, but with the inferences turned inside out. The importance of joining, or at least of securing the safety of Killigrew and Shovel, was the matter which dwelt in the foremost place in Torrington's mind, and his main effort, as sketched out, was the endeavour to join them. If he could not pass the French to the westward, but could keep in observation of them to the eastward, his colleagues would be safe enough. For if de Tourville should go west after them, Torrington would follow him up; if he should detach force sufficient for their destruction, he would weaken himself so much that Torrington might engage him at an advantage.

It was just the same with regard to Scotland. If Torrington was forced back—in order to avoid a battle—to the Gunfleet, the French could neither proceed to Scotland in full force nor send a detachment there. First, because they would be unable to shake off Torrington; and, secondly, because if they weakened themselves by detaching, Torrington would fall on the remainder.

The one thing certain, both from Torrington's words and Nottingham's, was that the French wished of all things for a general action with the odds in their favour, and this alone was sufficient to prescribe a refusal. The one point on which Nottingham could hang a grain of justification for the extraordinary enclosure which his letter contained, was his estimate of the relative forces watching each other. He assumed them nearly equal. Torrington and his brother admirals, looking at both fleets when they so decided, were of opinion that the odds were too great to give reasonable hopes of success. What right had any statesman or politician in London to treat as fallacious estimates of force so arrived at?

But Nottingham did it; for his letter, written in such haste

* Entick, p. 549.

that he was unable to take a copy of it, enclosed a positive order from the Queen to Torrington to bring the French fleet to action. The order ran :—

MARIE R.

Right trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, we greet you well. We have heard your letter dated June 26, to our Secretary of State, and do not doubt of your skill and conduct in this important conjuncture, to take all opportunities of advantage against the enemy. But we apprehend the consequences of your retiring to the Gunfleet to be so fatal, that we chuse rather you should upon any advantage of the wind give battle to the enemy than retreat further than is necessary to get an advantage upon the enemy. But in case you find it necessary to go to the westward of the French fleet, in order to the better joining with our ships from Plymouth, or any others coming from the westward, we leave it to your discretion, so as you by no means ever lose sight of the French fleet whereby they may have opportunities of making attempts upon the shore, or in the rivers of Medway or Thames, or get away without fighting. And so we bid you heartily farewell.*

This order was, of course, Nottingham's, and its wrongheadedness may possibly show itself to the reader who has followed me thus far. There is no sign in it of an understanding of the possibly overwhelming consequences of a lost battle, for it assumes it to be a bad thing to let the French "get away without fighting." Nottingham must have got it into his mind, and carried it into the mind of the Queen and her council, that the well-tried Herbert and his colleague flag-officers were incompetent cowards, fearing a battle where there were at least fair chances of success, and nothing to follow defeat if it should come. But as has often happened since, the statesman was found on the quarter-deck, and the rash blunderer at the seat of Government. There was absolutely nothing to be gained by a battle which could not possibly be a decisive victory, and over which from the great numbers engaged, and the limits placed on manœuvring by the character of the ships and the lightness of the wind, the admirals could have no real control. A complete victory to the enemy on the other hand, would, at the very least, have sent the Dutch King back to Holland, if it did not place this kingdom under the orders of the Pope and of Louis. The sailors saw it all well enough. The statesmen neither saw it then nor afterwards.

While Torrington's report of the 26th was on its way to town, and while Nottingham's despatch and its ruinous enclosure were on their way back, the British fleet had been pressed eastwards as far as Beachy Head. Torrington received the Queen's order on the 29th, and at once sat down to acklowledge the receipt of it to Nottingham.

* Entick, p. 549.

My Lord,

I this minute received Her Majesty's orders, which I will (so soon as I can get the flag-officers on board), communicate to them: I am very certain that they all will, with myself, with great cheerfulness give due obedience to her commands.

Now in answer to your Lordship's, I infer from the examination of the prisoners they took off Weymouth, and set on shore at the Isle of Wight, that the French are as strong as we take them to be; for were they not so strong, or under any consternation, I cannot think they would have put anybody ashore to bring us the news of it, but quietly have retired. For if they do not think they have the advantage, I am yet to learn what can move them to stay, having for several days had a fair wind to carry them off. And, my Lord, notwithstanding your advice from France, I take them to be 80 men-of-war strong. How they are manned indeed, I am not able to judge; but I am credibly informed by some French prisoners, who were taken in a small bark, that they are well manned, and that the Toulon ships are now with them. Had we had Killigrew with us, the match had been a little more equal. I cannot comprehend that Killigrew, the merchant ships, Shovel, or the Plymouth ships, can run much hazard if they take any care of themselves. For whilst we observe the French, they cannot make any attempt either upon ships or shore, without running a great hazard; and if we are beaten, all is exposed to their mercy. 'Tis very possible I reason wrong, but I do assure you I can, and will, obey. Pray God direct all for the best. I send your Lordship a copy enclosed of your letter to me. Pray, my Lord, assure Her Majesty that all that can be done by men in our circumstances shall be done for her service.*

In accordance with the Queen's orders and this decision, Torrington, at daylight next morning, proceeded to draw his fleet into line. The wind appears to have been from the eastward, and very light, and the line was formed on the starboard tack, with the ships' heads to the northward. The Dutch formed the van, Torrington, according to usage, commanded the centre, and Delaval the rear. About eight on the morning of June 30th, signal was made to engage, the allied line bore down on the French to leeward, who lay to with their head-yards aback and waited for the onset.†

* Entick, p. 549.

† The composition of Torrington's fleet is given in the *Memoirs of Lord Torrington* (Byng), already quoted, and I have not met it elsewhere. The Dutch van consisted of 22 sail, as follows:—

Ships.		Guns.	Ships.		Guns.
1	of	92	2	of	64
1	,,	82	1	,,	62
1	,,	74	4	,,	60
2	,,	72	2	,,	52
1	,,	70	5	,,	50
1	,,	68	1	,,	44

The English centre and rear of 35 ships:—

Ships.		Guns.	Ships.		Guns.
1	of	100	1	of	66
1	,,	96	1	,,	64
5	,,	90	3	,,	60
1	,,	82	1	,,	54
1	,,	72	1	,,	50
16	,,	70	2	,,	48
			1	,,	36

Here, I do not examine the tactics of the battle that followed. It is sufficient to mention that the Dutch in the van got into close action with the rear part of the French van, and were doubled on by the nine leading ships of the latter.* The British rear also got into action, but not so close, with the French rear. The ships in the French centre were to leeward of the van and rear, and Torrington in the British centre, attacked them only at long range, and left for some time a gap between himself and the Dutch. The Dutch were badly damaged, but saved themselves, or were saved by Torrington's orders, in consequence of their dropping their anchors when the ebb made, which the French not perceiving, drifted away to the westward out of gun-shot.† One of the Dutch ships, from inability to anchor, drifted away with the French and was captured.

In the evening, Torrington weighed, and taking in tow the disabled ships, beat to the eastward against the light foul winds that prevailed, taking the precaution to drop his anchors when the ebb-tide made against him. The French followed, not in general chase, but in line of battle, the contemporary opinion being that the desire to maintain the fighting formation saved our fleet from destruction. At any rate, the council of war which sat on the 1st July, decided that things were so bad with them that if they were pressed by the French, it would be necessary to destroy the disabled ships and retire, rather than face a renewal of the fight.

The French pursued, but not strenuously, for four days, by which time the Allies had reached Dover, and had left the enemy so far in the rear that the pursuit was abandoned, and the French drew off to the westward. The Allies suffered losses in the pursuit, four Dutch and one English ship having either been burnt or run ashore in a disabled state.

Naturally, the alarm was great in England on the news of this defeat spreading. Immediate invasion was the least that was expected. But it should seem that Torrington was entirely right in his strategical judgment. The French made for their original destination, Torbay, where they anchored and landed a party to burn the village of Tynemouth, which was easily driven off by

* *Memoirs relating to Lord Torrington*, p. 46.

† Not only were numbers of ships against the Dutch, but the individual power of their ships was less than that of the French. The average force of the 22 ships forming the Dutch van was but 61·8 guns, while of the 25 leading ships of the French it was 64·7.

the hastily assembled militia. They also destroyed one or two vessels of little value in the harbour, and later retired to Brest; some ruined houses at Tynemouth, some burnt small craft, and a single captured man-of-war being the insignificant trophies of the great expedition.

Torrington's defence of his conduct was the strategical condition he had to contend with. He was greatly inferior to the French, but they were powerless for mischief as long as his fleet existed. When forced by the Queen's order to fight a battle which there was no hope of winning against ships not only more numerous but of greater individual force, it behoved him to take care that he ran no risks of being beaten.

> That our fighting upon so great a disadvantage as we did was of the last consequence to the kingdom, is as certain as that the Queen could not have been prevailed with to sign an order for it, had not both our weakness, and the strength of the enemy, been disguised to her. . . .
>
> It is true, the French made no great advantage of their victory, tho' they put us to a great charge in keeping up the militia; but had I fought otherwise, our fleet had been totally lost, and the kingdom had lain open to an invasion. What then would have become of us in the absence of His Majesty, and most of the land forces? As it was, most men were in fear that the French would invade; but I was always of another opinion; for I always said, that whilst we had a fleet in being, they would not dare to make an attempt.
>
> In my letter of the 29th June, the matter is stated pretty plain: whilst we observe the French, they can make no attempt either on sea or shore, but with great disadvantages; and if we are beaten all is exposed to their merey. This I dare be bold to say, that if the management of the fleet had been left to the discretion of the council of war, there would have been no need of the excessive charge the kingdom was put to in keeping up the militia, nor would the French have gone off so much at their ease.*

So that, even though the beaten Allied fleet had come "to an anchor at the Nore in great confusion; and expecting that the French might attack them, all the buoys were taken up, and other necessary dispositions made as soon as they got there,"† yet the strategy of the conditions was such as to leave and keep the great French fleet powerless. If, indeed, the enemy had followed up and beaten the fleet at the Nore absolutely, "all would have been at his mercy." But "a fleet in being," even though it was discredited, inferior, and shut up behind unbuoyed sandbanks, was such a power in observation as to paralyze the action of an apparently victorious fleet either against "sea or shore."

This is the part of the battle of Beachy Head which constitutes its chief interest, but which is hardly touched by the

* Torrington's defence, Entick, p. 549.

† *Memoirs relating to Lord Torrington*, p. 47.

Harwich
Gunfleet
LONDON
Dover
Rye
Calais
Portsmouth
Beachy Head
2
1
3
Plymouth
Tor Bay
4
C. La Hague
C. Barfleur
La Hogue
Havre
St. Malo
THEATRE OF
OPERATIONS
1690 – 92.
EXPLANATION.
1. Allied Fleet June 23rd 1690
2. French " " " "
3. Battle of Beachy Head
4. " " La Hogue, 1692

different historians who have related the story. The first attempt of the French to gain the command of the sea with a definite ulterior purpose failed, because, as a fact, they were not enterprising or persevering enough to secure the preliminary condition. They had beaten our fleet, yet not to the point of annihilation which was necessary if the command of the sea was to be gained. Lord Torrington's acquittal by the court-martial which tried him, in the face of very strong influences on the other side, is a significant reminder of the naval views of that day.*

Both countries had now studied in the school of experience. But if the French had hardly got to understand what sort of a command of the sea would be necessary before invasion could be thought of; the English had taken some warning as to the dangers of delay and parsimony in the preparation of naval defence.

The French plan for 1692 was as follows. By arrangement with the disaffected party in England, an attempt was to be made to land an army of 20,000 men† on the coast of Sussex, the arrival of which should be the signal for a general rising in the country on behalf of James. This army, assembling with the necessary sea-transport at La Hogue, Cherbourg, and Havre, consisted of 14 battalions of English, Scotch, and Irish, and 9,000 French, was joined by the ex-King.‡ No doubt it was originally intended that the French fleet of 1692 should be as superior to that of the Allied English and Dutch as it had been in 1690, and equally beforehand in beginning hostilities. The authorities at Brest were ordered to prepare the whole of the ships there for sea, and orders were given that a contingent of 13 sail-of-the-line should join them from Toulon. Then the precedent of 1690 was taken up, and it was hoped that de Tourville—again in command—might be able to fall upon and destroy the British home fleet before it could be joined by the Dutch, and that then the invading military force might cross and encourage a successful rising of the Jacobites.

But two things happened, or rather three, which marred and rendered abortive the otherwise reasonable plans of the French. The Toulon contingent, approaching the Straits of Gibraltar on the 18th of May, was met by a gale of wind, which drove two of the

* A matter not touched on by any of the historians, which will deserve comment when I approach the tactical part of my subject, is the non-use by Torrington of his fire-ships. I have not observed that anyone says a word about them.

† Forbin, quoted by Lediard, vol. ii., p. 665.

‡ Entick, p. 555. O. Troude, vol. i., p. 209. Troude says there were but 12,000 men, but this is a mistake.

ships ashore at Ceuta, and so dispersed and damaged the remainder that they were not able to reach Brest till the end of the month of July, by which time many things had happened.

The second misfortune which the French suffered were the persistent advices from English Jacobites, that many of the captains of the British fleet had been gained over to the cause of James, and would desert to the enemy at the first opportunity.

The third misfortune was that the Dutch were more prompt and earlier than usual in joining the English fleet, and that Louis' information on this head had failed him.*

James pressed upon Louis the certainty of his information with regard to the disaffected English captains, and the relative weakness of the English fleet alone; and in an evil hour for the French success, Louis sent orders to de Tourville to put to sea with the 45 ships of the line and the 7 fire-ships which were ready at Brest, and to fall upon the English before the junction of the Dutch, whether they were strong or weak. De Tourville sailed, but foul north-easterly winds delayed his progress up Channel, and facilitated the passage of the English down Channel, and the approach of the Dutch to join them. Cruisers were despatched after de Tourville, from Barfleur and elsewhere, to countermand the previous orders, but the despatches never reached him, and he went on towards the point where the army for invasion was assembled.

The English had, as I have observed, profited by experience. They do not seem to have had any accurate information of the French complete design, for they were, down to the last moment, proposing a descent on St. Malo, and the necessary troops were called together at Portsmouth for the purpose. But they were well aware that a great sea force early in the field was the double necessity under the knowledge that some design was in preparation in France. Admiral Russell was appointed to the command of the Home fleet as early as the 3rd of December 1691, and great activity was displayed in pushing on the fitment of the ships.

Look-out ships were sent out to observe the movements of the French, and as the ships grew towards readiness, two strong squadrons were despatched into the Channel with orders so curiously inconsequent as almost to show that the real designs of the French were quite misunderstood.

Sir Ralph Delaval had arrived in the Downs with a squadron in the beginning of March, after successful convoy service from the Mediterranean, and was now ordered to reconnoitre the French

* O. Troude, vol. i., p. 209, *et seq.*

coast as far as Cape La Hogue, with scouts out to give him due warning of the enemy's approach. Then he was to cross over to the Isle of Wight, whence, if no orders reached him, he was to return along the French coast to Dover, and again, if no orders reached him, he was to repair to the flats off the North Foreland.

Admiral Carter, with a considerable squadron, including 11 ships for the line, had orders on the 14th of April to sail to the Channel Islands, and to cruise near St. Malo for eight-and-forty hours, unless "an opportunity of doing service" should recommend a longer stay. Then he was to look in at Havre, and if no service could be done there, he was to return to Spithead.*

It is not very easy to understand what was in the mind of the authorities dictating these orders. Mere reconnoitring a part of the French coast, where either no heavy ships or the whole naval force of France might be expected to be met, could have been much better carried out by a few very light and insignificant ships; and it does not appear that mere collection of intelligence was the object. But if not, then what *was* the object? Dangers were run in separating such considerable bodies from the main fleet, and leaving them liable to be taken at a disadvantage. I do not perceive that value, compensating for the risk, was aimed at. And, indeed, this view seems to have been speedily taken, for countermanding orders to both Admirals almost immediately followed, resulting in general directions to Russell, Delaval, and Carter to concentrate south of the Isle of Wight.†

Admiral Russell, with the main body of the English fleet, arrived off Rye on the 8th of May, where some of the Dutch ships were already at anchor. The joined forces seem to have anchored thereabouts, and on the 10th a council of war decided, on considering the orders given to Sir Ralph Delaval, that it would be prudent to make a further delay off Rye, so as to secure his junction.‡ The fleet, however, sailed for St. Helen's on the 11th, and on the 13th, Delaval and Carter, who had already formed a junction at sea, joined Russell at St. Helen's.

The British admiral now found himself at the head of an enormous fleet. The Red squadron, under Russell, with Sir Ralph

* Lediard, vol. ii., p. 656.

† Lediard (vol. ii., p. 656, note) considers that the first countermanding orders followed on intelligence that the French were preparing for sea (at Brest?). The dates were 20th and 23rd of April. Creasy, *Invasions of England*, says Russell was playing false, if so, many things are explained.

‡ Burchett, p. 463; Lediard follows.

Delaval and Sir Cloudesley Shovel as vice- and rear-admirals, consisted of 5 first-rates, 3 second, 16 third, and 7 fourth. The Blue squadron, under Admiral Sir John Ashby, Vice-Admiral Hon. George Rooke, and Rear-Admiral Hon. Richard Carter, consisted of 1 first-rate, 7 second, 18 third, and 6 fourth-rates. The English part of the fleet consisted thus of 63 ships of the line, carrying 27,725 men, and 4,500 guns. Besides these were 23 frigates and fire-ships.

The Dutch formed the White squadron, under Admiral Allemonde and two Vice-admirals, and consisted of 36 ships-of-the-line, namely, 9 first, 10 second, 9 third, and 8 fourth-rates. The division carried 12,950 men, and 2,494 guns. Attached to the division were 14 frigates and fire-ships. The total line-of-battle force was therefore 99 sail, carrying 40,675 men, and 6,994 guns. I suppose that never before or since has such a tremendous naval force been assembled under one admiral, and yet from want of proper intelligence, the French admiral at the head of less than half the force, was quietly sailing up channel to be destroyed by it.*

Russell seems to have had no advices of the near approach of the French. The Allies were full of the intended descent on St. Malo, and Russell's proposal was that, guarded by the whole fleet to the westward, the descent should be made by the troops prepared at Portsmouth. But as a preliminary a squadron of 6 light frigates was despatched towards Havre and that part of the French coast, to reconnoitre; and on the 18th of May the whole fleet weighed, and stood directly over towards Cape Barfleur.

It does not appear that either side was aware of the immediate proximity of the enemy. The weather was thick, and the wind light from the westward, and the Allied fleet stood on, on the starboard tack, till about 3 o'clock on the morning of the 19th May. Then guns were heard from the look-outs to the westward, and soon, out of the fog, two of them appeared with the signals flying denoting the presence of the enemy. Russell at once made the signal for the rear to tack, so as to meet the French if it should turn out that they were on the port tack. But as the sun rose, the weather cleared, and the French were seen to be forming their line on the starboard tack with their heads to the southward. Russell ran to leeward, and then, his line fairly well formed from S.S.W. to N.N.E.,

* Lediard gives the names and guns of 63 French ships, and says there were 55 small craft attached. But he admits he may over-state. Troude gives names of captains as well, and I accept his statement, the more so as Russell himself makes the number as under 50.

lay to and awaited the attack of the French, the Dutch White squadron forming the van, the Red squadron the centre, and the Blue the rear, as the signal to tack had been annulled.

What concerns us, now that we have brought the French fleet all but into contact with the Allied fleet of twice its force, is less any close investigation of its disastrous defeat which most inevitably followed, than those general reflections which naturally arise on such a complete failure of strategy. Let us first bear in mind that we have a set of conditions just opposite to those which had, two years before, surrounded the battle of Beachy Head. The superiorities of the attacking and defending fleets were reversed, and the attacking fleet was to windward, barred therefore from all chances of escape, because the propulsive force on which escape depended, was adverse. De Tourville had fallen into this horrible trap, not of choice, but from want of intelligence. Hoping, in the fog, that the enemy, of whose presence he possibly had warning for the first time by the sound of our look-out ship's guns, was at most the whole English, or the whole Dutch fleet, the lifting of the fog left him in face of a combination such as would have in any case kept him at Brest had he known of it. Close to him was the army of invasion and its transport. The cruising squadrons of the English had, up to this time, made it impossible for the force at La Hogue to dream of moving. Now, it was quite certain that, whatever happened, the game of invasion was up. It was not a question of de Tourville's being beaten, it was only one of escaping total annihilation, if such escape were possible. The invasion project so far had come to this, that there had been all the expense of collecting a useless army in Normandy, besides the certainty that such a collection was about to involve the greater or less destruction of the French fleet.

We are not told how the tide was when the two fleets sighted one another. Had it been flood, de Tourville might have profited by the example of Torrington, and by dropping his anchors immediately, suffered the enemy to drift away from him. Had it been ebb, I know not what he could have done other than what he did do, that is, to put the boldest possible face on it, and bear down to the attack.

But of course it was hopeless. In the thick weather that again set in, it was impossible to say exactly what happened, but that the unhappy French were everywhere beaten and dispersed. The wind had shifted to the N.W. by W. in the afternoon, which facili-

tated the attempts of the French to escape south and south-west indiscriminately, which they did. Later on the wind changed to the eastward and freshened. Next day (the 20th May) Russell wrote that it had continued calm all night. There had, during the day's calm, been an engagement to the westward of him, "which he supposed to be the Blue." "I can give," he said, "no particular account of things; but the French were beaten, and I am now steering away for Conquet Roads, having a fresh gale easterly, but extremely foggy. I suppose that is the place they design for.* If it please God to send us a little clear weather, I do not doubt but we shall destroy their whole fleet. I saw in the night three or four ships blow up; but I know not what they were."†

There was nothing now to be done but to pursue and destroy. Some of the beaten enemy made for St. Malo, and secured themselves; but some that escaped to Cherbourg and others to La Hogue were fallen upon and burnt by Delaval and Russell himself. There were no less than 15 ships of from 60 to 104 guns destroyed, 3 at Cherbourg, and 12 at La Hogue. The French attempt to gain the command of the sea had a second time failed, but now disastrously.

* He was still 21 miles N.E. of Cape Barfleur when he wrote. Conquet Roads are close to Brest.

† I have taken for illustration of battle at this date a sketch of a picture which hangs in the house of the Admiral Superintendent at Devonport, and of which no history exists, but to which I have had access through the kindness of Sir Walter Hunt-Grubbe, the present superintendent. The painting has suffered from decayed portions of it having passed through the hands of some audacious master painter in the yard, but what has not been touched is of exceeding beauty and truth. It is impossible to say who was the artist, but internal evidence points irresistibly to the conclusion that it is nearly as old as the yard itself, which was founded in 1691, or is a copy of a picture of that date. The single reefs in the top-sails, the colouring of the hulls, the shape of the tops, shortness of the mast-heads, cut of the sails, and other things, all fix the date of the ships represented as close to that of La Hogue.

SHIPS OF THE LINE IN ACTION AT THE CLOSE OF THE 17TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER VII.

Attempts to Gain the Command of the Sea with Definite Ulterior Purpose.—(*Continued.*)

The consequences of failure to gain command of the sea for an ulterior purpose.—The attempt of the French in 1695 to pass an army over to England, and its collapse.—The attempt of 1744 hardly to be classed under the subject of the chapter.—Its daring and rashness.—Its absurd ending.—Mistaken strategy of France in 1756–59.—Countries unable to protect their own seaboard can scarcely hope to attack those of other countries.—Narrative of the operations of 1759, and the destruction of every attempt at invasion.—Causes of French failure to be found in false strategical principles.

It is proper that we should glance for a moment, before passing on, at the consequences likely to arise from a complete failure to obtain the command of the sea for an ulterior purpose: the consequences, that is, of making naval warfare a means rather than an end. In 1690 the French attempt had been frustrated by the sound policy of the Earl of Torrington operating under very disadvantageous conditions, but governed by a profound conviction of the tremendous risks which would be run if the rash adoption of any other policy should land the allied fleets in a serious disaster. In 1692 the French may be said to have adopted the opposite view. They were prepared to stake their maritime life upon a cast, and to stand the hazard of the die. De Tourville's orders were, practically, to go through with it without regard to consequences. The naval war was made subordinate to the military war which was ready to be launched from La Hogue, and so overwhelmingly important did this military war seem, that any mere naval risk was not to stand for a moment in the way of it. So the die was cast, the battle of La Hogue was fought, and the French navy was destroyed, scattered, and dispersed, and the consequences had to be taken, which, however, as will be related in the proper place, the

French, by a return to the principles of legitimate naval war, were able in some degree to discount in 1693.

The Anglo-Dutch fleets may be said to have been quite unprepared for the absolute collapse which French maritime enterprise suffered on the defeat of de Tourville. Practically, the rest of the year 1692 and the whole of 1693 were spent in considering what was to be done, without coming to any definite conclusions. But in 1694 the notorious powerlessness of the enemy at sea determined an attack upon Brest by land and sea. There was, however, no heart in it, nor were the land forces nearly sufficient for so considerable an enterprise. It was in no degree surprising that on the failure of an attack on a fort in Camaret Bay the whole thing should have been abandoned; yet the cool audacity of the attack was a direct consequence of the defeat of La Hogue, and the sense of Torrington's language in relation to a broken-up fleet—if it is beaten, all is exposed to the mercy of the enemy—came home to the mind of the English Government. They provided abundance of mortar boats—bombs, as they were then called—and laid in good store of shells.

This being done, Dieppe was heavily bombarded on the 13th July 1694. Havre was bombarded on the 16th, and burnt steadily for two days. An audacious endeavour was made to smoke the inhabitants out of Dunkirk with a certain inventor's "smoak-boats," in September.

The Allies quietly took up a permanent position in the Mediterranean, and wintering for the first time in these latitudes, lay across French trade, watched French ports, and hampered every effort of France by sea.

The year 1695 was but one series of bombardments. St. Malo, in July, was fired by "machines," and had 900 shells and carcases thrown into it. Granville was destroyed. Dunkirk was attacked again, but again unsuccessfully, in August. Calais was bombarded with 600 shells, and next year with 300 shells again; while further down the coast, Belleisle, Houat, and Haedic were ravaged and harried. Palamos, captured by the French land-ways, was, in August 1695, bombarded by the Allies sea-ways; and, in fact, it was from 1692 to 1697 a mere question with the victorious powers what sort of mischief might be most conveniently and economically carried out. The French navy was thrown into such a state of demoralization for those five years by the break-up off the coast of Normandy that most of what was done in the maritime war way was the work of private enterprise. These were the days of Jean

Bart in the North Sea, as a private adventurer under Government control, and of the practice of hiring out as to contractors the ships, officers, and men of the Royal Navy of France.* Practically, it may be said that the failure of de Tourville to gain the command of the sea for the temporary advantage of getting the army across the Channel, involved the close of the naval war and the leaving every spot of French coast open to the descents of the enemy.

In the absence of any possible attempt to recover the naval position, France in 1695 was minded to try the possibility of rushing an army across, in the absence of the British fleet. The practice of laying up the great body of the fleet in the winter seemed to offer such an opportunity, and preparations were made for embarking an army at Dunkirk, Calais, and adjacent ports in the month of February. But intelligence to this effect having reached the English Government, orders were instantly given, on the 21st of that month, to mobilise the navy. So expeditiously was the business conducted that Russell found himself, on the 28th, off Gravelines, at the head of 40 sail of the line of English ships, and 12 Dutch, beside fire-ships and small craft. The mere appearance of such a fleet put to flight all ideas of any descent.

The next attempt of the French was not made until 1744; and though it can hardly be classed as one where the command of the sea was sought, yet as the intention was to provide sufficient naval force to escort the army over, it cannot properly be passed by; the less so as the expedition was prepared in peace, and its discharge upon our shores was intended to form the declaration of war.

The preparations were made in the winter of 1743–44 with great secresy; 15,000 troops in Flanders and Picardy were assembled at Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne, commanded by Count de Saxe, and accompanied by the Young Pretender and a body of his Scotch and Irish supporters. Transports for this force were collected at the ports, and a fleet of 18 sail of the line, under de Roquefeuille was fitted out at Brest and Rochefort, and entered the Channel on the 3rd of February.† The British Government

* La guerre de détail, la guerre de course avait seule occupé la Marine de la France. Les bâtiments de l'état et les officiers de vaisseau étaient prêtés, sous certaines conditions, aux armateurs ou aux compagnies qui voulaient tenter ce gendre d'entreprises auxquelles, du reste, les ministres eux-mêmes ne dédaignaient pas de s'associer.—O. Troude, vol. i., p. 235.

† According to Schomberg, 19 ships of 44 to 76 guns, and 4 of 26 guns. Vol. v., p. 207. O. Troude says simply 26 vessels. Vol. i., p. 296.

does not appear to have been early apprised of the designs of France. The general preparations for carrying on the war with Spain, and guarding against a coming war with France were considerable, but more perhaps in the way of attack than of defence against a particular form of it.

But the *Phœnix* 24, Captain T. Brodrick, was watching Brest, and saw the squadron on the same day that it put to sea. She at once made sail for Plymouth, arriving there on the 3rd of February, and sent off express to the Admiralty with the news. The whole of the ships available were at once whipped up. Admiral Sir John Norris was placed in command; he started for Spithead, picked up the ships there on the 6th of February, and sailed for the Downs, where the whole fleet was ordered to rendezvous. There he soon found himself at the head of 49 sail, of which 21 carried not less than 60 guns, and 11 not less than 44, a fleet therefore greatly superior to that which was approaching under de Roquefeuille.

This was seen at the entrance to the Channel by the *Bideford* and *Kinsale*, which were in charge of a convoy for Jamaica, on the 3rd of February, the day on which the *Phœnix* had arrived at Plymouth. Captain Young, who commanded the latter ship, judged that a higher duty was before him; he quitted the convoy, and made all speed to Plymouth with the news. The Admiralty were thus kept well informed of the progress and strength of the enemy. At Dunkirk the embarkation of the troops was proceeded with, though it is said that the process could only be made tasteful to the remainder of the troops by the execution of a recalcitrant member of the body on the beach, and in presence of his comrades.

The French fleet met foul winds and weather, and did not reach the back of the Isle of Wight until the 17th. The Admiral sent forward a look-out ship to examine St. Helen's and Spithead, and on the report that nothing was there, conceived the remarkable idea that the British fleet had retired into Portsmouth harbour. He thereupon despatched Commodore Bareil with 5 sail to Dunkirk to hasten the embarkation, as if under the impression that the coast was clear. He himself fell into a three days' furious gale off the Isle of Wight, and suffered much damage; but on the 22nd of February the wind changed to the westward and the weather cleared. The French Admiral took advantage of the change and anchored that evening off Dungeness.

It is easy at this point to take notice of the daring, as well as of the rashness of such proceedings as these. They can hardly be counted as naval warfare, and more clearly represent naval gambling. To assume, as de Roquefeuille had done, that because there were no ships at Spithead, therefore Great Britain at an hour of peculiar danger and anxiety would leave her coasts so unguarded that a force of a score of line-of-battle ships might become master of the British seas, was to place an abnormal faith in the stupidity of the islanders. He was about to conduct an attack which had been long in preparation, and which was vital to Great Britain, and yet his force was relatively small, however looked at. It was true that the British had a great fleet detached to the Mediterranean, and a considerable force in the West Indies at the time, but it was hardly to be supposed that she would have denuded her own shores to such an extent as not to be able to match de Roquefeuille's force. But unless she had done so, his position was perilous in the extreme. The method was not really an advance on that adopted in 1695, and which was so easily and so completely made absurd. The present attempt might just as easily turn out to be absurd, and something else, unless the very unlikely contingency of the absence of the British fleet could be calculated on.

And some such ideas were very forcibly impressed on de Roquefeuille's mind when he saw, the next day, the 23rd of February, the great fleet under Sir John Norris "tiding it round the South Foreland." At that moment, though the French were to windward, they were apparently embayed to the eastward of Dungeness, and powerless to escape from the superior fleet slowly approaching them. But fortune favoured the audacious squadron of the enemy. The tide failed Sir John Norris when he had got within six miles of the French, and the wind remaining foul and light, compelled him to drop his anchors. Upon ascertaining this respite, de Roquefeuille called a council of war, which determined that the sooner they got out of their critical position the better, and orders were accordingly given to weigh at sunset and to make sail with the tide at seven in the evening. This was done, and fortune still befriending them, a furious gale sprang up which drove them down Channel at the rate of 12 knots, and safely, though in some disorder, into Brest. Sir John Norris finding, when day broke, that the French had disappeared, returned to the Downs so soon as the weather permitted, and arrived there once

more on the 27th of February, though somewhat damaged by the heavy gale.*

Thus absurdly ended an expedition in which the chances were so much against the attacking side that it could not be ranged under the head of legitimate naval warfare. The French were only fortunate in escaping intact; for any impartial judge acquainted with all the circumstances of the early days of February must have predicted certain ruin to the French fleet. The attempt was and was not one to gain command of the sea for the ulterior purpose of invasion. Undertaken while the two nations were as yet at peace, and prepared in secret, it was to operate by way of surprise, although it was all but impossible that surprise could be effective. The naval force was insufficient to completely break up and disorganize anything but a very small force of the British, and it had been shown in 1690 that anything short of complete demoralization of the defending forces would be of no avail to permit the invading army to cross. Therefore, if full thought had been given to the matter, it must have been considered that the English Government would prove so extraordinarily supine as to leave practically no force in defence of its shores. But it could not have been unknown to the French Government that there never was a time when the English Government could be less accused of supineness, for in the previous December it had carried a vote appropriating 40,000 men for the sea, and 52,000 for the army and marines. The whole idea of the expedition betrayed a want of comprehension of the naval problem which pointed to the sinister influence of the most ignorant.

War with France, being again formally declared in 1756, tended to put a stop to a sort of disgraceful panic fear of invasion which had possessed the country, and to turn attention towards direct measures for preventing such a thing. France on her part mistaking, with the instincts of a military nation, the true points of naval policy, was full of invasion projects, and notwithstanding the several lessons she had already received, was bent upon making the naval subordinate to the military view; bent upon attempts to gain the temporary command of the sea with the ulterior purpose of passing armies over it, if not going further, and supposing

* The chief authorities for my description are Entick's *Naval History*; Hervey's *Naval History*, 1779; Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals*; *Batailles Navales de France*, O. Troude, 1867; Schomberg's *Naval Chronology*, 1815.

armies could be effectually guarded, and safely landed, under the protection of a mere escort.

The success of a somewhat contrary policy resulting in the capture of Minorca, and the general ill success of every other operation, instead of turning the attention of men of influence wholly to the concentration of naval force in order to wrest the command of the sea from the English, seemed to have directed attention more closely than ever to the idea of a military invasion. It was the more strange that such ideas should have prevailed at a time when the impotence of the French navy to protect its own shores was so very marked. Rochefort had been in September 1757 the object of a cool attack, in the absence of any French naval force competent to prevent it. In the following April (1758) Hawke broke up, in the inner waters of the Basque Roads, the convoys destined for the protection and sustenance of the French North American Colonies; and in June Anson assisted at another rehearsal of a favourite naval play—the partial destruction of St. Malo. In August the whole of the public works of Cherbourg were demolished under the protecting wing of Commodore Howe.

So far as experience had gone, only one way of preventing this kind of thing had been discovered; this was the neighbourhood of a sufficient naval force. The establishment and maintenance of such forces, which it was understood were prepared to meet equal forces of the enemy face to face at sea, had hitherto been found sufficient to frustrate all intention of territorial attack. France had fallen into the belief that though she could not protect her own shores, she might attack those of her enemy with naval forces which were at least doubtful about their being able to obtain such a command of the sea as they might hold. There was, in effect, a doubt as to whether the forthcoming invasion was to be conducted by force or by stratagem; by open defiance or secret evasion. And when the time came for putting such of it as remained possible into action, there was a difference of opinion between the Minister of Marine and the naval commander on the fundamental principles which were to govern proceedings. Strangely and ominously, it was the naval commander who held the view which was opposed to the teaching of experience so far. I shall advert to this point a little further on.

In the beginning of 1759, the French had three main fleets in existence. There were twelve sail of the line at Toulon under

Rear-Admiral de la Clue.* At Brest, under Vice-Admiral Marshal de Conflans, was a force which was counted up to 17 sail by the British scouts in June, and proved to be 20 or 21 sail of the line strong in November; and in the West Indies a squadron of 9 sail of the line under Rear-Admiral Bompart.†

This made up a total force of 38 sail of the line capable of being concentrated, had the command of the sea been aimed at, on the English force off Toulon, not exceeding 14 or 15 sail of the line; or on that off Brest, never exceeding 25 sail of the line, but seldom reaching that strength at any given moment.

Command of the sea as an end was not, however, thought of. Such concentration as was contemplated did not pass beyond the object of convoy or escort for the armies. One of these was collected with complete transport about Morbihan, a district comprising a group of estuaries opening into Quiberon Bay; it consisted of 19,000 men under the command of the Duke d'Aiguillon, and was originally intended to be convoyed to Irvine near Ardrossan on the Firth of Clyde, by Captain de Morogues with 5 sail-of-the-line and frigates. Preparations were also made for the embarkation of another army at Havre, in flat boats and small craft, and a diversion was to be made by a third force sailing from Dunkirk under Thurot, acting against some point on the north-eastern coasts of England or Scotland, or possibly Ireland. Great differences of opinion existed in France on the methods to be pursued, and no doubt as the months went on, and the preparations became more and more complete changes in the programme took place.

The English Government, animated by the genius of the elder Pitt, took a practical view of the situation. The Dunkirk invading squadron which consisted of 5 frigates, was watched by 12 sail of from 50 to 12 guns under Commodore Boys. Commodore Sir Piercy Brett lay in the Downs or Yarmouth Roads with another squadron of 8 sail, to guard against the chances of Thurot eluding Boys. An equal or superior fleet to that of de la Clue watched him in Toulon, and to Sir Edward Hawke was confided a fleet of 25 sail of the line and a powerful force of 50-gun ships and frigates‡ for the purpose of watching Conflans and guarding Morbihan, Rochefort and the Basque Roads, and preventing the unobserved escape of any French forces from these points.

This is not the place to discuss the causes of the advance which

* I give the name as we generally hear it. M. Troude gives it as "de Laclue."

† This is the usual spelling, but Troude spells it "Bompard."

‡ Sixteen, according to Schomberg.

had been made in the powers of defence by naval force, as shown in this distribution of the British fleets. We have hitherto seen them, when the attack on our shores was imminent, concentrated close at home to await it. Now we see the points of resistance moved away from our own shores, and transferred to the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy's ports. The change was chiefly due, no doubt, to the improvements in naval architecture which had continually progressed, and also to the improved quality and quantity of the provisions carried, as well as to a better state of hygiene* on board ship. But, undoubtedly, the change was also due to altered conceptions of the principles of naval war and to a more general acceptation of Lord Torrington's maxim that an intact defending fleet was an absolute bar to territorial attack. To the superficial strategist, the absence of great fleets in the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean was leaving the shores of England exposed. To the sound mind of Pitt and the instructed intellects of his naval supporters and advisers, the mere existence of these fleets was full protection to the coasts of the United Kingdom in the first instance, and afterwards cover for the more direct destruction of the enemy's invading material, and immediate prevention of even the issue of invading forces from the watched ports. Not, of course, that danger did not arise, but that it came more from the division of the naval force into several groups, which might be incapable of supporting one another, than from any removal of the bulk of the naval force to the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy.

As a direct employment of the cover gained by the masking of the French fleet at Brest, Rear-Admiral Rodney, with a squadron of 60- and 50-gun ships and bomb vessels, proceeded in July to bombard Havre and to destroy the invasion flotilla. Shells were poured into the place for fifty-two hours, and the flat boats endeavouring to escape out of it were pursued, driven on shore, and afterwards ordered by the victorious admiral to be burnt by their own crews under penalty that otherwise the town of Port Bassin, where they had sought shelter, should suffer the fate of Havre.

The main naval object of the French was the junction of the fleet of de la Clue with that of Conflans at Brest, and the pre-

* Hawke was able to maintain a winter blockade of Brest, but still bitterly complained of the badness of provisions, especially bread and beer, and had men constantly "falling down with scurvy," but this was a wonderful improvement on 1695, when the mere fitting out of a winter fleet put 500 men on shore sick, and still left the fleet unhealthy. See Burrows' *Life of Hawke*, *passim*, and Burchett, p. 541.

vention of this was the special object of Admiral Boscawen off Toulon. The means employed were not at all the confining of de la Clue in his port, but rather the bringing him to action at sea. The underlying principle was plain enough. If the French fleet could be brought to battle, come what come would of it, all immediate idea of a concentration at Brest must be given up. Even were Boscawen thoroughly beaten, which was not at all likely considering the relative strength of the forces, a return to Toulon by the French to refit and repair would be imperative after the action. The success of the French plan, however, chiefly depended on de la Clue's avoidance of battle; he was not to be drawn out, and he trusted to time to force Boscawen to retire for a space.

The British Admiral kept watch till the beginning of July, and was then compelled by want of water and provisions, and by certain damage to some of his ships to fall back upon Gibraltar. The coast being so far clear, de la Clue weighed from Toulon on the 5th of August, with his fleet of 12 sail of the line and 3 frigates, in hopes of passing the Straits of Gibraltar unnoticed. But Boscawen had placed a look-out ship off Malaga, and another, the *Gibraltar*, between Estepona on the Spanish and Ceuta on the African shore. On the 17th of August, Boscawen's ships were still in the middle of refitting: their sails were unbent, and some of them had their topmasts down.* Towards evening the French fleet drew near the straits, and running before a strong easterly breeze, found themselves off Cape Spartel at midnight, in a pitch dark atmosphere, and with no sign that they were in any way followed, perhaps with no belief that they had been even seen.

De la Clue was happy in the supposed success of his movements. No ship had shown a light, and the game was played and won; Boscawen was outwitted, the blockade of Brest and Morbihan would be raised, and the Scotch invasion at least would proceed. But there was a fatal flaw in his own conduct, of which he was far from perceiving the consequences. He had thought much of pushing on himself, and had been less careful of the order in which he maintained the fleet astern of him. He had made Cadiz the rendezvous of his ships, and when darkness fell and precluded the establishment of a fresh rendezvous, or even of any very definite communication of orders, by reason of the defective signal systems of those days, all the captains believed that Cadiz

* Schomberg, vol. i., p. 232.

was the destination. Now at midnight, the course to Cadiz was, perhaps, N.N.W., while the course to pass Cape St. Vincent and proceed up the coast of Portugal was, perhaps, W.N.W. At midnight M. de la Clue began to think of pulling his fleet together, and began also to think that the rendezvous at Cadiz was a mistake. He would simply be blocked there, as he had been blocked at Toulon. He could never expect again such a chance as was now before him. He shortened sail to allow the fleet to close up; he exhibited his stern lights to show his position, and he made, or attempted to make, a night signal which would direct the fleet to continue to steer to the westward.* Then, fearing that Boscawen's look-out ships might see the lights, and assuming that his ships had all seen and understood the intended signal, he complacently extinguished his lights and made sail for Cape St. Vincent. At daylight he had but six ships with him, and it was not until 8 o'clock that the report of 8 sail to the eastward gave him hopes that the stragglers were rejoining. He was then 30 or 40 miles to the E.S.E. of Cape St. Vincent, and he took steps to let this remainder of his fleet come up with him.

Now let us see what had been going on in the English fleet during this time. I do not think I can more clearly or forcibly tell the story than by quoting *verbatim* the language of the journal of the Captain of the *Namur*, Captain Buckle, Boscawen's flag-captain.†

Friday, 17th August 1759, moored in Gibraltar Bay. Wind E.S.E. to East. First part moderate and fair, middle and latter part a fresh gale, and hazy. P.M., received a long-boat load of water. At 8 heard the report of several guns, soon after saw a ship in the offing with several lights, then we sent our barge, who returned and informed us that the ship we saw was the *Gibraltar*, who had seen fifteen large ships at the back of the hill. At 9 made the signal to unmoor. Bent the sails and hove up the best bower anchor. At 10 made signal and slipped; the long-boat being made fast to the end of the cable, got athwart hawse, broke the slip-rope and went adrift. At 11 Cabritta Point bore west, three or four miles. Brought to, and hoisted in the boats. Employed clearing the ship. At midnight made sail. At 1 A.M. out all reefs and set top-gallant sails. Cape Spartel W. by S., seven or eight miles. At 6 saw seven sail to the westward. At 7 made the *Gibraltar's* signal to come within hail, and ordered him to make sail ahead and see what the strangers were. At 8 six Sweeds passed by to the southward. Made the signal for a general chase to the N.W. At 9 made the signal for the ships astern to make more sail. soon after repeated it. At noon all the fleet in chase.

* Troude, vol. i., pp. 373–379. M. de Lapeyrouse, quoted by Troude, says the Admiral made the signal to steer to the westward. But even as late as 1832 there was no such night-signal in the French navy; the nearest signal was "sail large" on the starboard or port tack.

† The journal, with great numbers of others, is preserved in the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford. The day begins at noon.

Saturday 18th, at noon Cape St. Vincent N.W. by W., distant eight or nine leagues. Winds East, E.N.E., and E.S.E. First part moderate and fair, middle and latter little wind. At 1 P.M. the strangers hoisted French colours, then we showed ours. Twenty minutes after made the signal to engage. At 50 minutes past made the *America's* signal to make more sail. At 2 repeated it; the enemy began to fire, as did the *Culloden* at 25 minutes past 2. At three-quarters past 2, the *America* backed her mizzen topsail and topgallant-sail and hauled up her mainsail. Then made her signal to make more sail. At 10 minutes past 3, made the *Guernsey's* signal to make more sail, which she not observing we soon after repeated it. At a quarter-past changed the chasing signal from N.W. to N.E. At 4 ran alongside the *Ocean*,* having a flag at the mizzen topmast head, and engaged her and two other ships of the enemy till quarter-past 7, when they made sail and shot ahead of us. The mizzen-stay being shot away the mast went overboard. The fore and main topsail yards likewise shot away, and all our sails and rigging much damaged; then the Admiral went on board the *Newark* and hoisted his flag there. Soon after one of the French ships struck, being the *Centaur*, of 74 guns and 750 men, whom the *Edgar* lay by. We had six men killed in the action and upwards of forty wounded. People employed repairing the damages. At 10 Thomas Quinnell, Thomas Cattness, and John Williams, seamen, died of their wounds. At 5 A.M. saw our fleet in the S.W. and made sail after them.

Sunday, August 19th, 1759. Noon, Cape St. Vincent N.W. ½ W. three or four leagues, winds West, N.W. by N., N.N.E., N.N.W., North, light airs and fair. At 2 P.M. saw three of the French ships at anchor to the eastward of Cape St. Vincent, and one on shore without any masts, being the *Ocean*, of 84 guns, who struck to the *St. Alban's*, as did one of the others to the *Warspite*. At 7 saw one of the remaining two on fire. The *Warspite* brought her prize into the fleet, being the *Temeraire* of 74 guns and 750 men. Unbent the foresail and fore-topsail and bent new ones. At half-past 9, the ship (that) was on fire blew up. At 10, saw the *Ocean* on fire. At midnight our ships brought in the other French ship, called the *Modeste* of 64 guns and 700 men. A.M. got up a new main topgallant mast and yard. Employed setting up a pair of sheers to raise the mizzen-mast. N.B.—The ship which blew up was the *Redoubtable*, of 74 guns.

Monday, August 20th, Cape St. Vincent distant twelve leagues. Winds N.W., N., N.E. Moderate and clear. At 4 P.M. Cape St. Vincent bore N.W. by N., eight or nine leagues. Admiral Boscawen returned from the *Newark* and hoisted his flag here. Raised the mizzen mast, and stepped it on the upper deck.

Such was the first battle of St. Vincent, as described in the cool and terse language of the official record. It is easy to understand what had happened in the French fleet. M. de la Clue, who paid with his life the forfeit of his error, small as it might have seemed at the time, had not been justified in assuming that his signals at midnight on the 17th had been seen and their purport understood. However he might have thought of it, his captains had no opportunity of looking into his mind and noting what was going on there. Five of the line-of-battle ships, and all the frigates, missing the rest of the fleet, had obeyed their orders and proceeded to Cadiz. The ships, which de la Clue did not see till 8 A.M. on the 18th, and which he for a time drew near to, supposing them to be

* De la Clue's flag-ship.

friends, were in fact the leaders of Boscawen's fleet, which were even then preparing for a general chase. The danger of playing fast and loose with a rendezvous had even then been fully recognized in the English navy, and it is highly improbable that any English admiral would have acted as de la Clue did. The importance attached to the thing is well illustrated in this very journal of Captain Buckle, in which a new rendezvous being given out on the afternoon of the 20th, and a lieutenant from each ship summoned to receive it, the names of the officers thus made responsible are entered.

The result of the error was a loss to the French of two line-of-battle ships burnt, and three captured, out of the total of seven. Two made their escape on the night of the 18th, and one reached Rochefort and the other the Canaries in safety. Poor de la Clue was landed badly wounded, and died of his wounds soon afterwards. The conjunction of the Toulon and Brest fleets was entirely abandoned, and those French ships which had got into Cadiz, only thought themselves too happy in escaping to Toulon as late as the 17th of December.

There was still the combination of Admiral Bompart's squadron with that of de Conflans, and against this Hawke was taking all possible steps. He was primarily concerned in a close watch upon Brest, in order that the fleet there should not be able to put to sea unwatched and unfollowed. The secondary object was as close a watch on the invading force assembled at Morbihan. But the greater danger was the junction of the Toulon fleet with the Brest fleet, and even after he had heard from Boscawen of the result of the battle of the 18th and 19th of August, he saw no cause to relax his vigilance. Boscawen wrote on the 20th, and did not then know that the half of the French fleet was in Cadiz, and capable of being masked. So that when Hawke in the latter end of August heard that Bompart had actually sailed from America, there was a possible combination at or near Brest of an exceedingly serious character. Bompart might make for Rochefort, and the moiety of de la Clue's fleet also, as a preliminary, and if Brest were opened, by heavy weather driving Hawke off, a junction might prove to be easy. He had not force enough to watch Rochefort as well as Brest. "If," he wrote on the 28th of August, "M. Bompart's destination should be Brest, I shall do my utmost to interrupt him. But should he be bound to Rochefort I must not think of him"—for the reason that a detachment to Rochefort, though enough to meet Bompart's nine sail of the line, would leave him

too weak even for Conflans, certainly too weak for the missing ships of de la Clue's fleet and that of Conflans' together.*

But later on, when Hawke was probably relieved of all apprehension on the score of the ships shut up in Cadiz, he did despatch Admiral Geary with a squadron to bar Bompart's entry into Rochefort, while another squadron, under Captain Duff, lay in Quiberon Bay watching Morbihan. And then, on the 10th of October, the Admiralty having informed him that Bompart was not likely to sail for Europe at present, Geary was recalled.

Hawke's plans were thus very simple; he would watch Brest as long as the weather would let him, and when driven off he would invariably make for the then safe anchorage of Torbay, where the store-ships and victuallers could always meet him, and where the whole efforts of the fleet would be concentrated on getting ready to put to sea the instant the wind changed.

On the same 10th of October Hawke, being off Brest, wrote :—

Their lordships will pardon me for observing that from the present disposition of the squadron I think there is little cause for alarm while the weather continues tolerable. As to Brest, I may safely affirm that, except the few ships that took shelter in Conquet, hardly a vessel of any kind has been able to come out of that port these four months. We are as vigilant as ever, though we have not as much daylight. . . . It must be the fault of the weather, not ours, if any of them escape.†

The fault of the weather, however, showed itself immediately, for on the 11th so heavy a westerly gale sprang up that the fleet sought shelter in Plymouth, whence Hawke wrote on the 13th :—

Yesterday and this day, the gale rather increasing, I thought it better to bear up for Plymouth than run the risk of being scattered and driven to the eastward. While this wind shall continue, it is impossible for the enemy to stir. . . . The instant it shall be moderate, I shall sail again.‡

Then next day, he says :—

Their lordships may rest assured there is little foundation for the present alarms. While the wind is fair for the enemy's coming out, it is also favourable for our keeping them in ; and while we are obliged to keep off, they cannot stir.§

The Admiral got back to his watch, now from the lateness of the season become one of desperate anxiety and hazard, by the 23rd of October, and the commanders of the inshore squadrons, breaking down in health as they were from the strain, are only warned that there must be less relaxation than ever. By the beginning of November, Hawke was informed that Conflans was under orders to put to sea and engage the English fleet at once ; but probably the

* Burrows' *Life of Hawke*, p. 380.
† *Ibid.*, p. 383.
‡ *Ibid.*
§ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

Admiral's wisdom doubted the fact, as there was no such superiority of numbers on the French side as would lead to hopes of victory. This, however, might be as it would, for on the 9th of November another westerly gale, which had been blowing three days, so increased that it drove the English fleet back into Torbay again, whence it was not possible to put to sea finally till the 13th.

It is necessary, as we now approach the *dénouement*, to look at the French part in this momentous drama. I have already said that there was a doubt over the whole of these invasion operations, as to whether they were to be carried out by force or stratagem. Indeed, considerable doubt has existed in my own mind as to whether I can properly class them as an attempt to gain the command of the sea with an ulterior object. The military preparations occupy so great a field, when I look across the Channel, that I cannot make up my mind whether there was anywhere in France such a real idea of gaining the command of the sea, as there had been in 1690 and 1692. The plans seem disjointed and mixed, without a consciousness running through them that the invading forces must pass unprotected through an enemy's country, unless that water-country was first conquered. The French idea of the whole matter departs from simplicity, and is difficult to realise. Neither de la Clue, Conflans, nor Bompart, seem to have been clear about what they were going to do—de la Clue, by his fixing a rendezvous at Cadiz, when he should have wanted to push on to Brest at all hazards and speed; Bompart by his delayed return; and both he and Conflans by their subsequent conduct. As far as Conflans was concerned, he certainly had no clear ideas of what was before him.

The timidity of our navy afflicts and humiliates me (wrote the Marshal de Belle-Isle to the Duke d'Aiguillon); above all, after the state in which I saw it at the beginning of the century. The King must give positive orders to M. de Conflans. He will not desire anything better, according to what I hear; but this is not enough. Many sad reflections arise upon it, but we may possibly hope that when things are once decided and ordered, they will stand on their honour.*

Conflans distinctly proposed to escort the convoy with his whole fleet.

The Marshal (Berryer, the Minister of Marine, wrote to the Duke d'Aiguillon) is not a sufficiently good tactician to have any hopes of holding the enemy in check by his skill, and I regard a battle as inevitable; then it would be much better to fight it before the convoy puts to sea. If we gain the victory, we shall easily push it over; if it is doubtful, it will still facilitate the passage over; if our fleet is destroyed, the army will not be lost.†

* Troude, quoting the Archives of the French Marine, vol. i., p. 381. † *Ibid.*

But de Conflans was urgent with his own views, and the Minister of Marine at length submitted. Yet is the Marshal's conduct inexplicable, for between the 9th and the 14th of November, when the coast was clear by reason of Hawke's absence in Torbay, Bompart arrived with his squadron and passed into Brest without difficulty. Notwithstanding that, and apparently without seeing how much this reinforcement of nine sail of the line* should have strengthened the views of the Minister of Marine and weakened his own, Conflans put to sea with his original 21 sail of the line on the 14th of November. His destination was Quiberon Bay, whatever he might have intended to do when he got there; but a strong easterly gale carried him 180 miles west of Belleisle.† Calms and light air then fell upon the fleet, so that when the wind changed to the westward at 11 P.M. on the 19th of November, de Conflans was still 70 miles S.W. ¼ W. from the island. He then filled and stood on, intending to go to the southward of the island, and to pass up Quiberon Bay next day. The wind, however, began to blow so strong from the W.N.W., that it was necessary to shorten sail in order not to overrun the distance. At daybreak on the 20th, several sail were seen ahead, and the signals were made to close up and clear for action. As the light came, seven or eight of these ships were made out to be the squadron of Captain Duff, which had been lying in Quiberon Bay watching the armament, and were now making all speed to escape from the superior fleet of the French. De Conflans thereupon made the signal for a general chase.

The same easterly wind which had carried de Conflans out of Brest, on the same day took Hawke out of Torbay,‡ and on the 15th he learned from Captain McCleverty of the *Gibraltar*, the same officer who had had the honour of announcing de la Clue's approach to Boscawen, that the French fleet had been seen seventy miles to the N.W. of Belleisle, steering to the S.E.§ Hawke thereupon shaped his course for Quiberon Bay, but the wind beginning to blow hard from S. by E. and S., drove the English fleet, as it was driving the French, far to the westward. On the 18th and 19th wind and weather mended, and Hawke pushed on to pass Belleisle

* The seamen of Bompart's squadron, as being more experienced, were substituted for those of de Conflans, but this only implied that the whole thing had been hopeless before. What was wanted was a superior fleet, and Bompart's ships would have made one.

† De Conflans to the Duke d'Aiguillon, quoted by Troude, vol. v., p. 402.

‡ Schomberg, vol. i., p. 327; Hervey, vol. v., p. 184; Hawke's despatch.

§ Schomberg, vol. i. p. 327.

on his left hand. The *Maidstone* and *Coventry* frigates were sent ahead to look out, but nothing was seen until half-past eight on the morning of the 20th when the *Maidstone* made the signal for seeing a fleet. Hawke at once made the signal to form line abreast.

This was the moment when de Conflans, full of his chase of Duff, and hailing the *Tonnant*, "that he was resolved to attack the enemy smartly and without any order,"* found himself perfectly satisfied that no superior force could be present, and yet counting 23 ships of the line, clearly British, which had just hove in sight to windward "in very good order."

Marshal de Conflans had issued, before he left Brest, a curiously verbose order as to how he proposed to meet the enemy, and especially how he would be satisfied with nothing short of engaging at musket range. The plans were very elaborate, but they all seemed to hinge on the point that the meeting of the fleets would take place in a particular way. Nothing was provided for the case now before him. So little had such a meeting been contemplated that there were no look-outs astern, although it was from the northward and westward alone that any hostile force could be expected to make its appearance. Yet there was but one thing before the French admiral; that was to turn and give the British battle in the open sea. To do anything else was to give up bodily the whole plan of invasion, and to leave it open to the enemy to shell the expedition to pieces in Quiberon Bay, as another branch of it had already been shelled to pieces in the Roads of Havre. The very best that could happen if de Conflans did not give battle at sea, was that the whole of the French would henceforth be blockaded in Quiberon Bay, a much easier task than their blockade in Brest.

But the whole plan from beginning to end was confused and without definite principle, and it was not possible to turn round full of principle at a moment's notice. Quiberon Bay is studded with rocks and shoals; the thought uppermost in de Conflans' mind was that if he could only get his ships into the Bay before those of the British, these rocks and shoals would prove in some sort a protection to the French; at any rate their danger would be less to the latter than to the former. Out of it all came the short story as told by Sir Edward Hawke:—

All the day we had very fresh gales at N.W. and W.N.W. with heavy squalls. M. Conflans kept going off under such sail as all his squadron could carry and at the

* De Conflans' despatch, quoted by Troude.

same time keep together; while we crowded after him with every sail our ships could bear. At half-past 2 P.M., the fire beginning ahead, I made the signal for engaging. We were then to the southward of Belleisle; and the French Admiral headmost, soon after led round the Cardinals,* while his rear was in action. About 4 o'clock the *Formidable* struck, and a little after, the *Thésée* and *Superbe* were sunk. About 5, the *Héros* struck, and came to an anchor; but, it blowing hard, no boat could be sent on board her. Night was now come, and being on a part of the coast among islands and shoals, of which we were totally ignorant, without a pilot, as was the greatest part of the squadron, and blowing hard on a lee shore, I made the signal to anchor, and came to in 15 fathoms of water. . . .

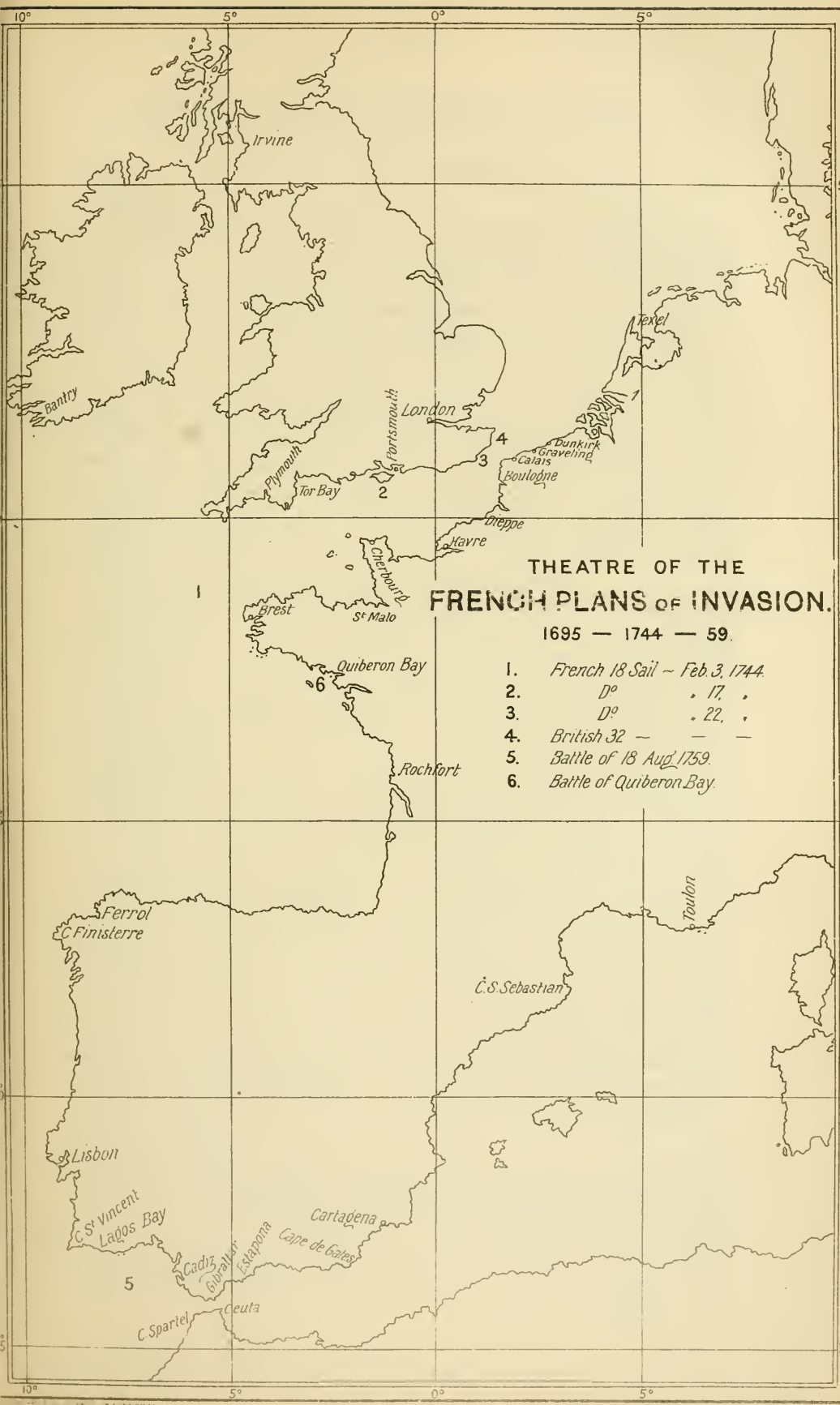
The French fleet, in short, was totally broken up and destroyed. Of the 21 sail of the line that had left Brest a week before, 2 were driven ashore and burnt; 2 were sunk; 1 was wrecked off the Loire; 1 was taken; 11 saved themselves by throwing all their guns and stores overboard and escaping into the shallow waters of the river Vilaine; while 8 only made good their retreat to Rochefort.

This terrible but decisive battle necessarily put the finishing stroke to the collapse of the French plans, which had indeed set in as soon as they came to be formulated. It is only necessary to add to the narrative the statement that M. Thurot's expedition proved itself the most successful of all, inasmuch as on the 12th of October he escaped to sea with his squadron, taking advantage of a gale which drove Commodore Boys off his station. His good fortune followed him so far as to permit him to gain the neutral port of Gottenburg in Sweden, and afterwards that of Bergen in Norway, where the squadron lay till next year.†

When from the singularly abortive character of all these plans on the part of the French in the year 1759, we turn to the question of whether they failed through bad management, faulty principles, or want of enterprise, I think we can say that while the first and last elements were present, they could hardly be absent when

* A peninsula and then a group of islands surrounded by rocks—of which Houat and Hædick are the chief—run down from the N.W. to the S.E. and form the Bay of Quiberon; the Cardinals are the rocks at the extreme S.E. point.

† Naval history has hitherto been so written that simple as the story of the operations of 1759 is respecting the invasions proposed, it is hardly to be drawn from any single narrative. My sketch leaves much unexplained which it would be of the highest interest to enlarge upon and to seek for in those MS. authorities where alone the answers are to be found. But such things are altogether beyond the scope of my present purpose. I have drawn my narrative from comparisons of Schomberg's *Naval Chronology* 1815; Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals* 1813; Hervey's excellent but little known *History of the Navy* 1779; O. Troude's *Batailles Navales de la France* 1867, and above all, for what relates to Hawke, Burrows' *Life of Lord Hawke*, beyond measure the most interesting naval work of our time.



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attempts to set up and enforce such faulty principles were also present.

I think it becomes more and more clear as we proceed, that the sea is not, and cannot be made, neutral ground. For the purposes of passage it is almost always in the hands of one side or the other in war, and if undisputed passage across it is desired by one side, it must be obtained by conquest of the water territory.

France in the year 1759, was, it seems to me, entirely mistaken on this fundamental principle. The only chance she could ever have had of successful invasion must have come after, and not side by side with, conquest at sea. With squadrons at Toulon, Brest, Rochefort, and the West Indies, which were all possible to her, she had so magnificent a strategic position that, barring mismanagement and the chapter of accidents, there was a possibility of her beating the British fleets in detail, as it was a necessity of the position that their naval forces should be divided.

This being so, it should have been her sole object to make such combinations as would have enabled her to fall on British detached fleets with superior force. If she were able to effect this purpose, and to gradually weaken her opponent thereby, there would be no possible difficulties in the way of invasion on any scale thereafter. But her attention, which should have been thus simply directed, was split up into two parts, one in preparing to invade, and the other in preparing fleets of which the employment was doubtful. Had she concentrated her mind wholly on the defeat of the British by sea, who is now to say that she might not have affected her purpose supposing her enterprise to correspond with her resolution? If her enterprise was unequal to the task, surely it must have been much more unequal to conveying armies across, and landing them in the face of naval forces admittedly superior. Or if it be said that it was hoped to escape the notice of these superior forces at sea, where was the advantage of adding great naval forces to accompany the transports? So that in whatever way the French plans be regarded, we see a want of clear comprehension of the strategical problem, and cease to wonder at the want of principle which governed every detail of the proceedings.

It was manifestly weak to prepare the transports, as in the case of Havre, in so exposed a position as to leave them open to destruction by shells and carcases.* No less clear was de la Clue's

* The bombardment lasted 52 hours, during which 1,900 shells, and 1,100 carcases were thrown into the place.

mistake in making Cadiz the rendezvous when everything depended on his evading Boscawen, and making all speed to join de Conflans. Out of this primary error arose the others, which led directly to the catastrophe of Lagos Bay.

Why de Conflans should ever have made for Quiberon Bay is at present to me an unfathomed mystery. His clear plan was to have engaged Hawke as far as possible from the army transports, which were already in possession of a stout convoy under de Morogues. Had he followed Hawke up into Torbay and there engaged his attention, de Morogues would have had a clear field up the St. George's Channel. But drawing Hawke down upon the transports was an effective means of preventing their sailing; and as already observed, to withdraw from the security of Brest to the open position of Quiberon Bay, was to court the destruction which came upon him. And, then, the final error of not proceeding to meet Hawke with the 9 sail of Bompart's squadron incorporated with his own, is but the key-stone of the series. If anything would have given the project success, it would have been the display of 30 sail of the line east of Ushant, and even the defeat of such a force might have crippled Hawke for the time so as to compel him to let the army pass.

No doubt this history, like so much other naval history, requires re-writing. Explanations of steps in themselves inexplicable might then be forthcoming, but it is hardly possible that we should not still pronounce that the plain principles of naval warfare were everywhere disregarded by the French nation in the year 1759.

CHAPTER VIII.

Attempts to Gain the Command of the Sea with Definite Ulterior Purpose.—(*continued*).

The entertainment of an idea of gaining the command of the sea merely for a particular purpose tends to reconcile a nation to the place of the inferior naval power, and to make it unable to desist from attempts almost necessarily abortive.—So France renews in 1779 her old schemes, but in concentrating a great combined fleet in the Channel, fails to take advantage of the inferior British fleet which was opposed to her.—The same ideas begin to work in France as early as 1796, and either directly or indirectly govern the movements of the enemy's fleets till the close of the war.—The consequent waste of naval force at St. Vincent and Camperdown.—The openness of the invasion flotilla to attack from the sea.—The indefinite and abortive combinations and manœuvres up to the close of the war.

It was twenty years after the failure of 1759, before France made another attempt to gain the command of the sea for the purpose of transporting an invading army across it. But the state of things was such on the approach of the year 1779, that she began, as it were, to see her way to another undertaking of the same nature, but bolder and grander. I think we cannot have avoided observing how very marked is the difference between the attempt to gain the command of the sea as an end and as a means, when we have before us the practical effect as exemplified in the Dutch wars and these successive failures on the part of France. Looking back on the ground we have passed over, it does seem as if there were a possibility that had France thought nothing of invasion, but had devoted herself wholly, as Holland did, to wresting from us the command of the sea, she might always have maintained a better naval position than she actually did. But wasting her energies on a double design, she fell more and more at the opening of each war, into the position of an assuredly inferior naval power, which could only look to better her position by some stroke of fortune much more to be hoped for than expected.

Nothing ever seems to have turned the French commanders and statesmen from the repetition of these hitherto abortive double measures. In 1767, two French officers were in this country drawing up plans for invading it in the manner most likely to be successful. Their report proposed a sudden descent during peace time, as only parallel with the common practice very freely indulged in by this country, of making war by sea long before its formal declaration. The army to be prepared was to consist of 40,000 infantry, 6,000 dragoons, and 4,000 light troops (cavalry) with a proportionate detachment of artillery. The light cavalry were to embark with their horses, but the heavy cavalry were to pick up their mounts as they penetrated up country. The selected point of landing was Deal beach.*

It must be supposed that these reports were laid up in the archives at Paris awaiting opportunity, but as there could have been no hopes of carrying out such a scheme in absolute secrecy, so that the immense force could be slipped across without convoy or protection, it ultimately fell into the old groove, with the hope that it might be carried out when the command of the sea could be temporarily secured on purpose.

It was not till 1779 that opportunity seemed to offer, when France, allied with our revolted colonies in North America, and pressing Great Britain heavily as a consequence, drew Spain to her side. It then became possible to show, by combining the fleets of both powers, a greatly superior force than any which this country could at the moment produce. But France, as usual, was unable to pursue the simple policy of attempting to gain the command of the sea. The project was now, in fact, three-fold. The fleets were to be combined as one object, an attack on Gibraltar by Spain was a second, and 40,000 men were assembled along the coasts of Normandy and Brittany,ready to cross the sea and invade the country, as a third.

In the spring were collected at Brest more than 30 sail of the line, and 10 frigates, and at Cadiz and other Spanish ports were about 36 sail of the line and 10 or 12 frigates. After some weeks warning, the whole available force of England came to only 37 sail of the line and 24 frigates, fire-ships, and small craft.

The French fleet, unhindered and almost unwatched by us, quitted Brest on June 3rd, to join the Spaniards on their own coast, but a month elapsed before the junction even began to be

* See Lord Mahon's *History of England*, vol. v., App. xix. Sir E. Creasy notices it in his *Invasions of England*.

effected. Spanish pride was hurt at the idea of serving in a fleet commanded by a French admiral—d'Orvilliers—and the ships were slow in making their appearance. It was not till the 2nd of July that 8 ships of the line and 2 frigates under Vice-Admiral Don Antonio Darce, joined the French from Ferrol, and twenty more days passed before the remaining division joined from Cadiz, consisting of 28 sail of the line with 7 frigates and small vessels, under Vice-Admiral Don Luis de Cordova. This made a total force of 66 sail of the line and 14 frigates and small vessels; but the force was not united, as Cordova took 16 sail of the line under his separate command as a "squadron of observation."* Tactically the division was sound enough, as it was known that the combined portion was of greater force than any likely to be met in the Channel, and the neighbourhood of a fresh fleet would almost make victory over the English secure. But possibly national jealousy and not tactics was the moving principle. d'Orvilliers on his side did a superficially wise thing in separating 5 line-of-battle ships, under La Touche Treville, to form a light squadron.

All was therefore well outwardly with this immense armament in the first week in July, and presumably the 40,000 men were ready and waiting for the order to embark and cross. Let us see how England stood in the way of preparation.†

On June 16th, proclamation was made to begin hostilities against Spain, and on the same day Sir Charles Hardy sailed from St. Helens with the 37 sail of the line and 24 smaller vessels already mentioned. He stood away at once to the westward and was cruising off Ushant, 30 or 40 miles to the westward of it, until he 26th. Then he stood away north, and was to the westward of Scilly till July 2nd. On that day he was twenty miles nearly due south of the Land's End, making his way to Torbay, where he moored on the 6th and remained till the 14th.

On quitting Torbay, on the 14th of July, Sir Charles again stood to the westward, and again cruised to the northward and westward of Ushant for two or three days. On the 23rd he was back again on the English coast, and was cruising between Plymouth and Scilly until the 11th of August, without apparently any intelligence whatever.

* I am following Troude, vol. ii., p. 31. Schomberg's numbers are slightly different.

† It was not a good omen that on the 11th July there were 1,035 sick, and 174 convalescent in the French fleet alone, and since leaving Brest they had lost 48 men by death, and sent 412 to hospital at Corunna. See Troude, vol. ii., p. 33.

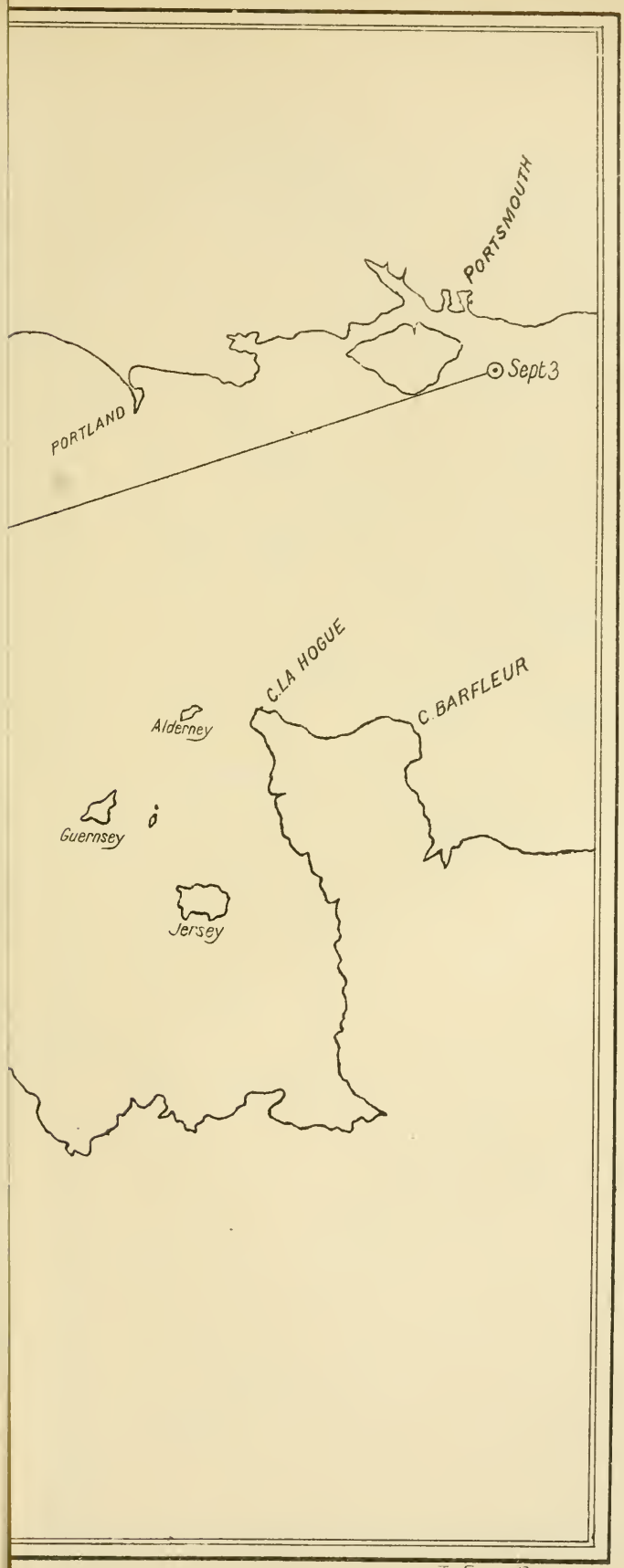
On the 12th of August he was 34 miles S.S.E. of Scilly, with a westerly wind which continued to blow for several days. Sir Charles not only maintained his position against it, but was getting farther to the westward. On the 15th his position was well to the northward, Scilly bearing about E. by N. 47 miles.*

The whole of these movements seem rather aimless and vague, in the absence of information regarding the combined fleets. If it had been intended to intercept the enemy in his way up Channel, the position off Ushant might have been maintained with look-outs to the northward, or the position off Scilly might have been held with look-outs to the southward. But in the absence of assigned reasons, it is a complete puzzle to discover why Sir Charles Hardy should at one time have taken the one position and at another time the other. If, again, the invasion was apprehended, and the great strength of the enemy's fleet was known, this cruising to the westward with such a very inferior force would appear to have been exactly what the enemy would have most wished for. It placed him in the position of forcing battle, and then, on the defeat of the British force, the carrying out of the plan of invasion. The only reasonable strategy for Sir Charles Hardy was that adopted so long before by Lord Torrington, a policy of observation and threatening; and such a policy would have left the British fleet at Torbay if not at St. Helens, with abundant scouts—of which we must remember Sir Charles had 24—to give the earliest information of the enemy's approach. What is at any rate clear, from a glance at the map, is that the approach to the Channel was quite open from the 12th of August, and as the wind was then and until the 19th from the westward, this leaving of the Channel uncovered, was deliberate.†

We have seen that it was not until the 22nd of July that the French and Spanish fleets were combined at and off Ferrol, probably some time was occupied in the different arrangements for proceeding, and the divisions of the fleet already mentioned. After that, sail was made for Ushant, and after sighting it, a course

* I have taken the positions from the Flag-Captain's journal, now at the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford.

† It is a misfortune that the naval history of this time is the most defective of any. Entick closes his with the execution of Byng, Harvey with the appointment of Sir C. Hardy to command the Channel fleet in 1779; Schomberg, Beatson, and Campbell have but a few notes, the latter supposing that there never was anything serious contemplated by the enemy. Schomberg supposes the strong easterly winds forced the enemy out of the Channel, and prevented Sir Charles Hardy from getting in; an entirely erroneous idea. Troude and Chevalier are a little better.



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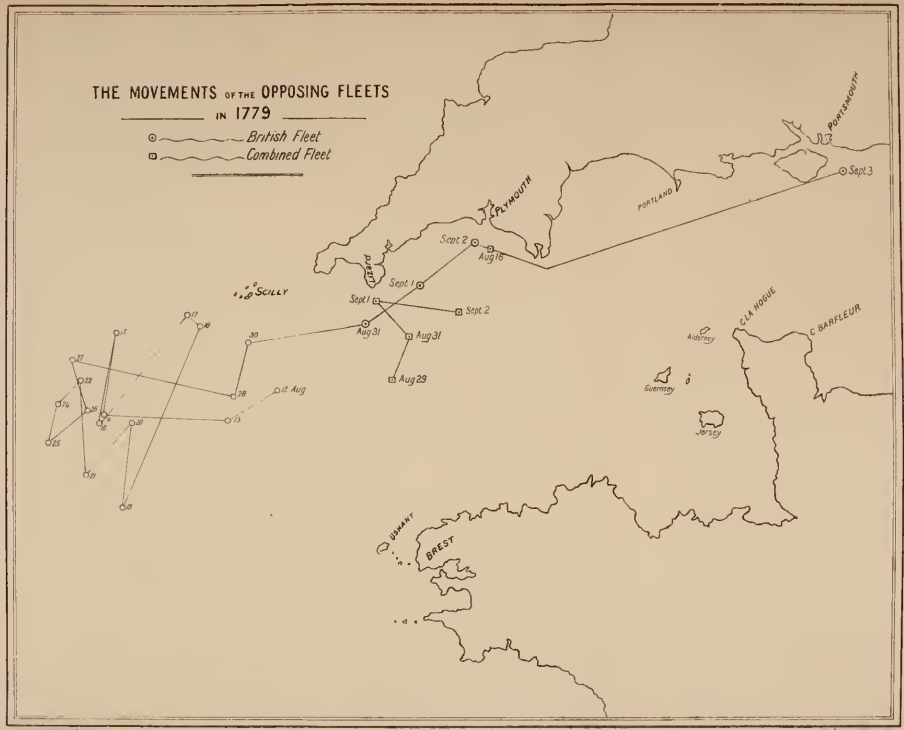
THE MOVEMENTS OF THE OPPOSING FLEETS
IN 1779
British Fleet
Combined Fleet
PORTSMOUTH
Sept 3
PORTLAND
PLYMOUTH
Sept 2
Aug 16
Sept 1
Sept 1
Sept 2
Aug 31
Aug 31
Aug 29
SCILLY
C. LA HOGUE
C. BARFLEUR
Alderney
Guernsey
Jersey
USHANT
BREST
12 Aug

was shaped for the English Channel. The great fleet, besides suffering heavily from sickness, as mentioned, was already short of water and provisions.*

The intention of d'Orvilliers was to proceed in the first instance to Torbay, to anchor there and to more equally distribute the provisions remaining in the fleet, as well as to receive the supplies which had been demanded from Brest. Following out this intention, the great fleet swept up Channel, and on the 15th of August was in sight of Plymouth without having seen a sign of a British look-out ship or a shadow of opposition. The English historians who record these transactions think it was "by some unaccountable event" that the combined fleet was able to evade that of Sir Charles Hardy. A glance at the map shows us that there was nothing unaccountable in the matter, but that, as we have already seen, the way might be said to have been specially left open for d'Orvilliers to approach. As early as the 12th of August Hardy had passed to the westward of any reasonable strategical position, not driven thither by stress of weather or want of wind. The westernmost strategical line was the Ushant-Lizard line, and if the guarding of the Channel were the object in view, no position to the west of it was a right one. But it is clear that from the 12th to the 20th of August, at least, Sir Charles Hardy was always where he should not have been, and d'Orvilliers was quietly sailing up Channel to the southward of him. On the 15th of August, the enemies were 120 miles apart, the combined fleets off Plymouth, and the British fleet nearly 50 miles beyond Scilly.

On the outside of things, it is not easy to imagine a position of greater peril to this country than was now exhibited. There was enough Franco-Spanish force to have allowed of such a division as would have kept Sir Charles Hardy in check, and, if necessary, to have brought him to action at a great disadvantage, while leaving an ample strength to convoy the troops over and protect their landing. Or, if still safer tactics were employed, it would have been easy to have completely destroyed Sir Charles Hardy's fleet by means of the overwhelming odds at hand, and then with all ease and leisure to have passed over as many armies as might have been necessary for the subjugation of the United Kingdom.

It was not until the 19th of August that a change of wind to the eastward put it out of the power of Sir Charles Hardy to return immediately to his proper position, and it was not until the 20th

* Troude, vol. ii., p. 33.

that he got any news of the enemy. The easterly wind, however, reached the combined fleets before it did that of the British. The wind was easterly off Plymouth on the 16th, and the strength of it was so gradually increasing that Torbay was no longer a safe anchorage, and the idea of going there had, in fact, to be given up.* This not only prevented the combined fleets from going to the eastward of Plymouth, but as the wind increased, tended to drive them to the westward. It was probably on this account that one of Sir Charles Hardy's ships was able to report to him on the 20th that she had seen 15 sail to the N.E. The *Porcupine* was ordered to chase in the direction, but she returned without seeing anything of the enemy.

And now set in a period of aimless cruising on both sides, Sir Charles being generally 60 to 80 miles to the south-westward of Scilly, and d'Orvilliers, apparently with his fleet somewhat scattered, south of the Lizard. The winds were fresh from the East, N.E., and S.E., not seemingly either in direction or force so persistent as to prevent Sir Charles Hardy from making some easterly progress had he been so minded, nor yet to prevent d'Orvilliers from holding his own.

On the 28th of August, Sir Charles Hardy had crept up to a position south of Scilly, and about 22 miles off; the wind was light, and the weather growing from hazy to thick, and very thick. Thus it was on the 29th, when the following entry appears in the captain's journal:—"6 P.M., the bumboat informed us she had counted 28 large ships to the S.E., which she was certain were part of the combined fleet." It still continued very thick, but Hardy was able to make signals for calling in the cruisers. On the 30th it was moderate and clear, and at noon the British fleet was in the position marked on the chart; a part, at least, of the combined fleet were also where I have noted their position, for 16 sail of them were in sight from Hardy's flagship near that spot at 7 A.M. Hardy, it will be observed by his position on the 31st, S.S.W. from the Lizard, was making no attempt to approach the combined fleet, which, in its turn, was but languidly following up the British. At half-past four on the morning of the 1st September, the *Duke* made the signal for seeing the enemy to the S.W., and then Hardy, apparently for the first time, made sail to reconnoitre. At five they

* I get the winds from the minutes of the court-martial on the officers of the *Ardent*, 64, which ran into the midst of the combined fleet, and was captured on the 16th, nine miles from Plymouth.

counted 60 sail of large ships, and later were near enough to distinguish some of the flags displayed. Two frigates were now sent down to reconnoitre more closely, but some of the enemy's ships appearing to bear down on them, they were recalled. At noon on September 1st, the admiral had been informed by signal from some of his look-outs that the enemy was in superior force; the whole of his own fleet was in company, steering to the eastward, the enemy being visible astern. At half-past 5 P.M., 38 sail of the enemy's fleet were still visible to the westward, but only from the mast-head. They were still in sight at 5 A.M., on the morning of the 2nd of September, and continued so all the forenoon. At 11 A.M., Hardy anchored his fleet 6 miles S.W. of the Ramhead, on account of the ebb tide making, and so as to widen his distance from the enemy. After this, no more mention is made of them, except that after the fleet weighed next evening, one of the look-outs reported 7 sail to the S.W. Hardy made sail to the eastward, and anchored at Spithead next evening.

The French account is in agreement with all this. Finding, when as far up Channel as Torbay, on the 17th of August, the wind strong from the eastward, not only was it necessary to beat up to it, but it became an impossible anchorage as entirely open to that wind. The weather continued bad for several days. On the 25th, d'Orvilliers, having had precise intelligence as to Sir Charles Hardy's fleet, called a council of war to deliberate on the situation. It was shown that some ships had 300 sick, and neither doctors nor medicines on board; that others were so short of water that they were obliged to borrow from day to day from their neighbours; that several, and notably the *Bretagne*, were provisioned only till the 25th of September. The council of war unanimously decided either to seek the British fleet in the Soundings, or to wait for it there. The council further decided that it would be necessary in any case to terminate the cruise on the 8th of September, and that then, conformably to the orders received by the Spanish admiral, the Allies should separate as soon as convenient. The combined fleet thereupon made sail to the westward for the Soundings.

The British fleet does not appear to have been seen until the 31st of August, and was followed up languidly as described, until the 1st of September, when, believing it to be 18 or 20 miles to windward, and in a position to enter Plymouth, and having also intelligence of the appearance of a great number of sail to the westward, which afterwards turned out to be a Dutch convoy, the pur-

suit, if such it can be called, was finally abandoned, and the great fleet steered for Brest.*

Thus ended quite the most promising attempt for our enemies, and the most threatening for us, of these attempts to gain the command of the sea for the purpose of invasion. My authority attributes its complete failure to the delay of the Spaniards in forming their junction with the French. Such delay bred sickness, want of provisions and water, but more, perhaps, loss of temper and heart in the business. But I think while we admit the want of enterprise in not bringing to an issue so fair an opportunity, we must allow that a fatal double purpose reigned in the combined councils. Had there been but the single idea under which we have seen that the Dutch always acted, it is almost inconceivable that with such an ample force, Sir Charles Hardy's fleet would not have been sought, found, and possibly mastered early in August. The half idea of acting by way of invasion in the face of Hardy's fleet, and the other half idea of attacking the fleet, left divided decisions, and councils thinking more of getting home again. There is really no clear explanation of what the fleet meant to do, but whatever intentions it may have had were paralyzed by the neighbourhood of the very inferior fleet of the British.

I pass now to consider the preliminaries which led up to the greatest, most persistent, and best-arranged of all the attempts of France to gain the command of the sea for an ulterior object.

The period from 1797 to 1805 was one during which the naval operations in the Channel, in the North Seas, off the coasts of France, Spain, and Portugal, in the Mediterranean, and even, perhaps, in the West Indies, were all dominated more or less by a single idea; that of gaining sufficient command of the sea to get an army across the Channel.

Although preparations for the great business were in progress as early as the autumn of 1796 certainly, and though some attempt at systematic invasion was as early as that date expected in England, it remained for the mind of Napoleon to comprehend the whole field of war, and to see the immense possibilities of the strategic position held by France and her Allies or subordinates.†

* See Troude, vol. ii., pp. 33–36.

† Lord Grenville writes to the Marquis of Buckingham, January 30th, 1794, "The French seem certainly disposed to try their scheme of invasion. . . . Our best defence is unquestionably our water-guard, which is very strong, and will, I think, every day get stronger.—*Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III.*

Lord Malmesbury landing in France, in 1796, on the abortive peace negotiations of that date, notes in his diary: "October 19th. Calais. Report of an intended in-

In 1796, though the beginning of the great Boulogne flotilla had been made, and ideas of repeating on a greater scale the method of invasion adopted by William the Conqueror—embarkation from one beach, and disembarkation on the other in a host of small vessels—were current, the immediate proposals for invasion were of a more desultory kind : invasions which were to be carried out by comparatively small bodies of troops, sustained and supported by squadrons of ships not sufficiently large to attempt gaining command of the sea, but only capable of repelling the attack of comparatively small squadrons.

These ideas were focused in the expedition of Hoche from Brest to Bantry Bay in December 1796, and the intended expedition of the Dutch from the Texel to the North of England, or Scotland, which, after lying ready for many weeks, was broken up and abandoned in the autumn of 1797. It is by no means necessary at this stage to discuss these plans in detail, but a brief notice of them is desirable, as it cannot be doubted but that their failure produced in the mind of Napoleon the conviction that naval war could not be carried on in that way with any hopes of success against the United Kingdom, but that an absolute command of the sea was a prior necessity if invasion were to be carried out at all.

The attempt of Hoche, which became abortive from a variety of causes, was nevertheless a proof of the inefficiency of the blockade of Brest in the face of an enemy ready from moment to moment to put to sea. But on the other hand, the inner life of Hoche's forces, naval and military, as told by the rebel Theobald Wolfe Tone, the long delay after all was ready for a start, and the weary watching of the signal stations from day to day for the announcement that the coast was clear, are equally a proof of the extreme difficulty of getting to sea unobserved, and the likelihood that an expedition might break up simply as a consequence of the delay.* This moral is even more strongly pointed by the

vasion." On the 20th he has "Troops at St. Valery. Gun-boats of a new construction at Boulogne; 25 men, 2 24-pounders, and 2 horses; to slip out on rollers."—*Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury.* Vol. iii., p. 276.

* The embarkation of the troops was going on at Brest on November 17th. On the 23rd, Tone "could not imagine what delays them now." On the 25th Colonel Shee tells him they will be off in six days. Tone himself embarked on December 1st, Hoche and the staff embarked on the 12th. The fleet put to sea on the night of the 16th, and next morning 25 out of the 43 sail that should have been in company were missing. See *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone.* Washington, 1826.

result of the intended invasion from the Texel, and it is again Wolfe Tone who gives us the inner life of the blockaded fleet and its difficulties.

The Dutch fleet consisted of 15 sail of the line, 10 frigates and sloops, and 27 transports, carrying some 13,500 men. Two things were wanting to enable them to pass to sea: a fair wind and an absent enemy. The two never came together; provisions and stores wasted and disappeared; the troops were disembarked, and the whole expedition given over.*

These two failures were hardly a part of any general scheme. The troops embarked were mere flying columns, intended to trust themselves to their own resources, and to the supposed friendliness of parts of the invaded populations. They were without hopes, or should have been without hopes, of communications with their own country after landing.

But could nothing be done beyond these desultory failures? France, in 1797, was not France alone, but for the purpose of those naval operations by which the invasion of England might be made possible was perhaps France, Holland, and Spain; with it might be other naval powers thrown in, such as Russia and Denmark.

The whole coast, from Nice along the French and Spanish shores of the Mediterranean, out into the Atlantic as far as the river Guadiana, was hostile; then, after the interval of the Portuguese coast, the hostile line began again at the river Minho, and was traced round the Bay of Biscay, along the Channel coasts of France, out into the North Sea, along the coast of Holland as far as Oldenberg. Then, after a short interval of the coast of Hanover, began the doubtful shores of Denmark and of the Baltic.

Along this line, the principal hostile ports where the enemy could collect and arm, and whence he might be expected to issue, were Toulon, Cartagena, Cadiz, Ferrol, Rochefort, Brest, and the Texel. In 1796 it was understood that the Spanish Alliance with France might array against us the following line-of-battle fleets, distributed somewhat as given below:—

Toulon - - - - - -	15 French
Cartagena - - - -	18 Spanish

* All had been some time ready to start when Tone arrived on July 8th 1797. From that time till September 3rd, when he left the fleet, knowing that the expedition had collapsed, the days were passed in watching the weather-cock and the British fleet, which was generally in easy view from the anchorage. The Dutch seem to have been perfectly well informed of everything as it went on in England; of the mutiny, and of the exact strength of Duncan's force from day to day.

Cadiz - - - - - -	3 Spanish
Ferrol - - - - - -	26 Spanish
Guarnizo* - - - - -	7 Spanish
Brest - - - - - -	21 French
Texel - - - - - -	21 Dutch
Newfoundland - - - -	7 French
Havannah - - - - -	18 Spanish

In many respects, especially on the Spanish side, this was no doubt a paper force, but a grand total of 136 sail of the line was one from which many deductions might be allowed and yet leave a very imposing array behind them.

A glance at the chart will show the immense strategical power in the hands of the French Government, moving all these forces from such a central position as Paris. Blockade at this time, though much more complete than it had been, was still but an intermittent power, subject to the vagaries of the weather and to the necessities of provisioning and watering the blockading ships in sheltered spots, which could generally be found at only a distance from the port to be watched. However heroic and persistent the attempt of the blockading forces might be, it was always uncertain whether a watched force might not be able to escape unseen, and to bury itself at sea, no one knew where.

Under such circumstances, a superior force on the side of the British might prove very inferior in defence. If it concentrated on the shores of the United Kingdom, it might certainly prove a sufficient defence against invasion, but then it abandoned not only the commerce of the Empire, but most of its outlying territories. If it was divided into numerous squadrons, each employed in watching one of these great war ports from Toulon to the Texel, what was to prevent even several squadrons of the enemy from escaping, forming a junction, and falling in vastly superior force upon any selected one of the British squadrons at the moment most inopportune for it? Paris could despatch orders to Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon, so that they would reach those ports certainly and simultaneously, in a few days. Horse expresses to Ferrol, Cadiz, and Cartagena, were in a measure certain and speedy.†

London was at the extreme end of the chain of forces to be moved and governed. It was impossible to warn blockading

* A port on the north coast of Spain, now of no importance.

† Napoleon at Boulogne received a dispatch from Lauriston at Ferrol on the 22nd of August, which probably left the latter place on the 10th.

squadrons simultaneously. The Toulon squadron could not possibly know till weeks had passed what news had been given to the squadron off Brest on a certain day. And even when messages were sent and reached the intended spot, it was never certain that the ships would not have been driven off by a gale of wind, or have fallen back to some point on the strength of a true or a false alarm.

But Great Britain's duties and necessities were such that she could never guarantee having superior forces stationed off each port. Speaking generally of the date mentioned, her line-of-battle forces were in quantity and distribution as follows:—

In the North Sea	26
In the Channel	29
On the coast of Ireland	2
In the Mediterranean	31
In the West Indies	20
North America	5
At the Cape of Good Hope	8
In the East Indies	5
	126*

So that not only were the total forces nominally 10 sail short of the numbers set out by the enemy, but the British Colonial necessities took away from the European war theatre 38 sail of the line against the 25 only which were withdrawn from the enemy's European forces.

Speaking in general terms, then, and not troubling ourselves with those changes of distribution which were so constantly going on that it is difficult to be accurate at any given moment, the position was this. There was a possibility of the French finding 111 sail of the line at command, strategically disposed in secure ports in Europe, and capable of reinforcement by 25 sail more from the other side of the Atlantic. There was a probability that as a defence against these, the British would be able to bring no more than 88 sail, broken up into squadrons generally inferior to the forces in port opposed to them, and everywhere open to be overwhelmed by concentrations initiated and ordered from Paris, of which the British could have no conception whatever until it was too late.

Some sort of picture of this kind must have early presented itself to the mind of Napoleon, as it possibly did to other French-

* This total includes all ships with guns on two decks, one ship having but 44 guns.

men, as early perhaps as 1796. The central idea which grew out of it was the formation of a great army along the shores of France nearest to those of England, from Ostend to Etaples, the provision of a special kind of transport in the form of gun-boats, flat-boats, and horse-boats, repeating in some measure the characteristics of that flotilla which had brought over in a former age the army of Duke William.

Very possibly this flotilla had been originally destined to move alone, or at least that there had been no original idea of making use of the full strategical resources of the alliance in the sudden concentration from different points of an immense naval force in the Straits of Dover, sufficient to hold the waters against all comers and to cover and protect the crossing and landing.

On the other hand, the possibilities of these strategic combinations were already well known on both sides of the Channel. What is not so easy to understand is the object of many of the combinations made and operations undertaken previous to the time when Napoleon, as Consul and Emperor, took the matter wholly into his own hands.

The first combination was a powerful one, had it been employed directly to wrest the command of the whole sea from our hands,

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Reference to Chart of Theatre of the Operations, 1797 to 1801.

1.—Place of Battle of St. Vincent, Feb. 14th. 1797.
2.—Place of Battle of Camperdown, Oct. 11th. 1797.
3.—Position of Lord Bridport's Fleet (16 sail of the line) on April 30th, 1799.
4.—Position of French Fleet (25 sail of the line) at same date.
5.—Lord Keith's Fleet (15 sail of the line) in presence of French Fleet, on May 4th, 1799.
6.—French Fleet at the same date.
7.—Duckworth's Squadron (4 sail of the line) at same date.
8.—Lord St. Vincent's Fleet (now 21 sail of the line) on May 30th, 1799, with news that the Spanish Fleet (17 sail of the line) was at Cartagena, and that the French Fleet (22 sail of the line) had left Toulon three days before.
9.—French Fleet in Vado Bay on same date.
10.—Spanish Fleet at Cartagena, same date.
11.—Position of Lord Keith's Fleet (20 sail of the line) on June 8th, 1799, when he turned back in obedience to Lord St. Vincent's order.
12.—Position of French Fleet (22 sail of the line) at same date.
13.—Position of Lord Keith's Fleet (19 sail of the line) on June 19th.
14.—Approximate position of French Fleet (22 sail of the line) at the same date, on its way to Cartagena.
15.—Lord Keith's Fleet (now 31 sail of the line) in pursuit of the Combined Fleets on July 26th, putting into Tetuan for water.
16.—Approximate position of the Combined Fleets (40 sail of the line) on their way to Brest, at same date.

that is, had it been engaged in for the simple object of destroying and capturing our ships. Langara, shortly after the declaration of war by Spain, that is in October 1796, passed into the Mediterranean from Cadiz with 19 sail of the line and 10 frigates. At the time there were 7 sail of Spaniards at Cartagena, and 12 sail of French at Toulon. Langara picked up the 7 sail at Cartagena and then effected his junction with the French at Toulon, where the combined fleet amounted to 38 sail of the line and 18 or 20 frigates.

Sir John Jervis commanded a fleet in the Mediterranean of no more than 15 sail of the line, while Mann had been watching Cadiz with no more than 6 sail. Instead of joining Jervis, as he should have done, this officer took on himself to fall back into the Channel, leaving Jervis wholly in the power of the combined fleet, had its objects been simple and definite. No attack or attempted attack was made on him, and he fell back to Gibraltar and Lisbon, leaving the Allies masters of the Mediterranean sea.

Of course, had real command of the sea been aimed at, the Allies should have fallen on Sir John at all hazards, following him out of the Mediterranean, if necessary, with that object. But with an infirmity of purpose which requires explanation, the combination made was broken up, and the Spaniards alone and undesignedly fell into the hands of Jervis on the 14th of February next year, and suffered the penalty, off Cape St. Vincent, of deliberately neglecting the first principles of war.

Equally wasteful of naval force, and unmeaning as to any possible advantage to be gained, was the battle of Camperdown at the other end of the strategic line on the 11th of October following. The Dutch fleet of 15 sail had, as we have seen, landed all the troops and abandoned the idea of invasion, so that when it was determined to put to sea in the face of a known superior fleet of British ships, the enterprise was objectless. In the Mediterranean, the French and Spanish admirals, with a fair chance of breaking up Jervis's force, neglected to do it, and lost their opportunity. In the North Sea, the Dutch, without any hopes beyond destruction and bloodshed, proceeded to engage the British force. Both mistakes were equally grave and obvious, so that there is some difficulty in understanding whether there was any single intelligence actuating the operations.

All the possibilities, and both these errors, were necessarily in the mind of Napoleon, when, a month before he sailed for Egypt—that is in the middle of April 1798—he wrote his celebrated

Memorandum on the Invasion of England, and supposed that the expedition he was about to undertake was to be directly instrumental in securing a superior naval force in the Channel.*

He calculated then, that by the month of September there might be 35 sail of the line at Brest, and 400 gun-boats at Boulogne, with troops at hand that had spent the whole summer in becoming inured to these vessels and sea life in them. The Dutch at the same time, he thought, would have sufficiently recovered the blow of Camperdown to be ready with 12 sail of the line in the Texel. There were in the Mediterranean 12 French sail of the line, which might be augmented to 14 by September, and there were also in French hands 9 sail of the line which had belonged to the Venetian Republic. The 14 French ships Napoleon thought might go to Brest, so as by the month of October or November to show a force of 50 sail of the line in the western part of the Channel beside the 12 sail in the eastern part. It might then be possible to carry out the invasion upon three selected points of attack:—namely, 40,000 men coming by long sea to be landed at some point to be determined; 40,000 men to cross in the invasion flotilla, and 10,000 men to be landed in Scotland by the Dutch.

The expedition to the East would oblige England, Napoleon thought, to send 6 additional sail of the line to India, and perhaps 12 frigates to the entrance of the Red Sea. She would be obliged to have 22 to 25 ships of the line at the entrance to the Mediterranean, 60 before Brest, and 12 before the Texel. Napoleon, or his copyists for him, fall at this point into some loose arithmetic, for he says this would make a total of 300 ships of war,† without counting what the British already had abroad, or the ten or twelve 50-gun ships and score of frigates which she must keep to oppose the invasion flotilla. "The invasion of England," he said, "put in practice in this manner, in the months of November and December, would be almost certain. England would waste herself by immense efforts, but these would not secure her from our invasion."

This was the theory of it, but Napoleon did not perceive that he was about to violate a clear rule of naval war in the first instance in his own person, and that the whole arrangements were too

* "Soldiers! you are one of the wings of the army of England!" Address to his troops, see *Victoires, Conquêtes, &c.*, vol. x., p. 375.

† James translates "line-of-battle ships" in error. The mistake was great enough as it stood.

vague and indeterminate, even without the absurd arithmetic, to promise any success. If, as he somewhat wildly conceived, the passage to India was open to him through Egypt, and that it was by means of evasion and not by command in the Mediterranean sea that he hoped to get there, he should have left the 13—not 14—sail of the line safe under the batteries of Toulon. Taking them with him, he deliberately exposed them to the fate they met at the hands of Nelson in the following August. And if he, by his occupation of Egypt, had compelled the British to send ships to India, they could now afford to do it, having captured and destroyed 11 of their opponents at home.

The enemy also wasted his forces in subsidiary attacks, almost bound to be failures if the matter had been rightly considered. Thus in August 1798 Commodore Savary took a body of 1,150 troops, under General Humbert, on board a small squadron escaping from Aix, which landed in Killala Bay in Mayo and duly surrendered soon after. A larger expedition under Commodore Bompart sailed from Brest for the North of Ireland on the 16th of September. He was followed up by British look-out frigates, and news of his progress was duly sent on to the Commander-in-Chief on the Irish coast. As a consequence, Sir John Warren met him off Lough Swilly, on the 11th of October, and captured the main part of his squadron.

But the invasion flotilla itself was under considerable difficulties. The British in command of the sea were interfering with it all along the line. In July 1795, Sir Sydney Smith had made a beginning by capturing and garrisoning the little Islands of Marcouf which lie four miles off-shore south of Cape Barfleur. The islands were found a convenient spot for interfering with the flotilla arrangements, and were held against attack both without and with assistance from the sea.

On May 19, 1798, Ostend was shelled; 1,140 troops were landed, who destroyed the canal lock and gates, and several gun-boats in the basin, though they were afterwards obliged to surrender to the superior force which the French had had time to collect.

On the 30th and 31st of the same year, a frigate and corvette belonging to the flotilla were driven on shore by the British near Havre, and the frigate was burnt.

In June 1800, a British squadron attacked the frigates lying in the anchorage of Dunkirk, and one of them, the *Desirée*, was cut out and brought away.

And then, as the time seemed to be approaching when decided

steps were to be taken with regard to the flotilla, Lord Nelson was placed, in July 1801, in command of the operations against it, which was followed by the shelling of Boulogne on the 4th of August, and an audacious attempt to break up the flotilla there on the 15th.

The operations of 1799 were on a great strategic scale, but yet they only serve to show how divided purposes and diverse aims fritter away the golden opportunities in naval warfare.

By the month of April, France had 25 sail of the line at Brest under Bruix, watched by a force under Lord Bridport which did not exceed 16 sail of the line. The French were industriously spreading reports there that they had now a design on Ireland; and taking advantage of Bridport's withdrawal to a distance, and of thick weather occurring simultaneously, put to sea on the 25th of April with the whole force of 25 sail of the line, and were off, no one knew where. Bridport, after despatching cruisers to Lord Keith, off Cadiz with 15 sail of the line, and to Lord St. Vincent at Gibraltar, and also homewards to convey the news, fell back himself to Bantry Bay, where he was presently reinforced, and found himself a match for the enemy, and at the head of 26 sail of the line.

But Ireland was at the moment far from the thoughts of the French. On the 3rd of May, Lord Keith, at the head of his 15 sail of the line off Cadiz, was made acquainted with the fact that the Brest fleet was coming down on him, having been most probably joined by 5 Spanish ships which had sailed from Ferrol. The 17 or 18 Spanish ships in Cadiz which Lord Keith was watching, shewed no signs of movement, yet practically he was being brought into the presence of a fleet of 48 sail of the line, to which he could oppose no more than 15.

The fleets were in sight of one another on the 4th and 5th of May, but it was then blowing a westerly gale, which would have prevented the Cadiz Spaniards from coming out, had such been their intention, and the result was that the French, who had not, after all, been joined by the Ferrol Spaniards, ran before the gale into the Mediterranean.*

Lord Keith then, after counting, as he supposed, 22 sail of the line in the harbour of Cadiz, fell back and joined Lord St. Vincent at Gibraltar. Despatches of warning were then sent off

* Troude says, vol. iii., p. 157. that Bruix was ordered to join the Spaniards at Cadiz, but that the state of the weather, with his untrained crews, forbid him either to fight or to make for Cadiz.

to Duckworth, who had 4 sail of the line at Minorca; to Nelson at Palermo, whose 12 sail of the line and 4 Portuguese ships were scattered over the Mediterranean, at Naples, at Alexandria, and at Malta.

On the 11th of May, Lord St. Vincent, meeting combination by combination, and endeavouring at any rate to guard Minorca as the point most obviously threatened, made for that island with his 16 sail of the line, where, being joined by Duckworth's 4, he now found himself at the head of 20 sail of the line.

The withdrawal of Lord Keith from Cadiz enabled the Spaniards to send 17 sail of the line to sea on the 14th of May, and these, notwithstanding some mishaps in a gale of wind, found their way safely into Cartagena on the 20th, just a week after the Brest fleet had put into Toulon.

As a consequence of these circumstances, Lord St. Vincent was driven to place himself between Toulon and Cartagena, in order that, by preventing a junction between the French and Spanish ships, he might avoid the risk of finding himself in presence of a combined fleet of more than double his strength. But he was in this difficulty. Either the Spaniards from Cartagena, or the French from Toulon, might suddenly issue forth and strike at the greatly inferior force of Nelson on the coast of Sicily. When this contingency presented itself so forcibly to the mind of St. Vincent as to make him weaken his own fleet by 4 sail of the line in order to strengthen Nelson at Palermo, we can well understand the straits he was in, even if he knew, which he probably did, that a reinforcement of 5 sail of the line was close at hand to join him. Having made these arrangements, Lord St. Vincent, whose health was completely shattered, gave up the command to Lord Keith and prepared to return to England.

The general station of the British fleet was now off Cape St. Sebastian, and there, on the 30th of May, Lord Keith heard that the French fleet of 22 sail of the line, under Admiral Bruix, had put to sea from Toulon on the 27th. Lord Keith now took the strange step of proceeding to Toulon himself; I say the strange step, because if the thing to be feared were the junction at Cartagena, this movement left it open more than ever. To close with the port of Cartagena, with the hope of meeting and fighting the French before they could be succoured by the Spanish, had an obvious promise of advantage, which drawing near to Toulon after the French had left it could certainly not have had.

While the obvious course was not taken by the British, the French missed a course equally obvious; that was, to make a *détour* to the eastward, and passing round Lord Keith's fleet, make for Cartagena from the westward rather than from the northward. Occasions took them to Vado Bay, near Genoa, and this especially favoured the eastern *détour*, which was not taken.

Lord Keith stood past Toulon as far as Fréjus, where, on the 5th of June, he heard that the French were at anchor in Vado Bay, and at once made sail in that direction. He reached within 90 miles of the place, where, on the 8th, he received imperative orders from St. Vincent, who had not yet quitted Minorca on his homeward voyage, to return to Rosas Bay, near Cape St. Sebastian, for the purpose of intercepting the French fleet. This order is one of those which we meet sometimes, and must admit to be inexplicable, for how Lord Keith was thus to intercept a French fleet known to be at sea, and supposed to be steering for Cartagena, a glance at the chart fails to give the slightest hint. It is still more perplexing that Lord Keith, with his good information as to the presence of the French only 90 miles from him in Vado Bay, and with his knowledge that St. Vincent could not be aware of this, should have so promptly obeyed the order, in so far as it concerned his abandonment of that pursuit of the French, but not in so far as concerned his proceeding as directed to Rosas Bay. For he steered, in point of fact, for Minorca. On the day that he turned thus to partly obey St. Vincent's orders, the French fleet weighed from Genoa, to which point they had meantime moved, for Cartagena; but instead of steering the safe course well to the eastward, it followed directly on Lord Keith's track, sighting Toulon, and the pursued became the unconscious pursuer.

The result of this backward movement of Lord Keith's was that the blunder of Bruix in sighting Toulon brought him no harm.* He crossed the path of Lord Keith behind him, and got safe into Cartagena on the 23rd of June. On the 24th, then, there was a force of some 40 sail of the line ready for sea in that port.

Meanwhile, Lord Keith, after rather aimlessly wandering about in the Gulf of Lyons for weeks, was compelled to fall back on Minorca for water. There he was joined on the 7th of July by a detachment from the Channel, which augmented his force to 31

* James reads the French accounts as if Bruix was credited with the determination to attack the British, of whose advance he had heard. Troude, vol. iii., p. 158, says distinctly that Bruix was forbidden to fight until joined with the Spanish, and that he weighed to avoid the British.

sail of the line; and there he learnt how, a fortnight before, that which it should have been his sole aim to prevent had occurred, and that the combined French and Spanish fleets were in his rear at Cartagena; not only this, but that on the 24th of June this same combined fleet had sailed, and was on its way out of the Mediterranean.

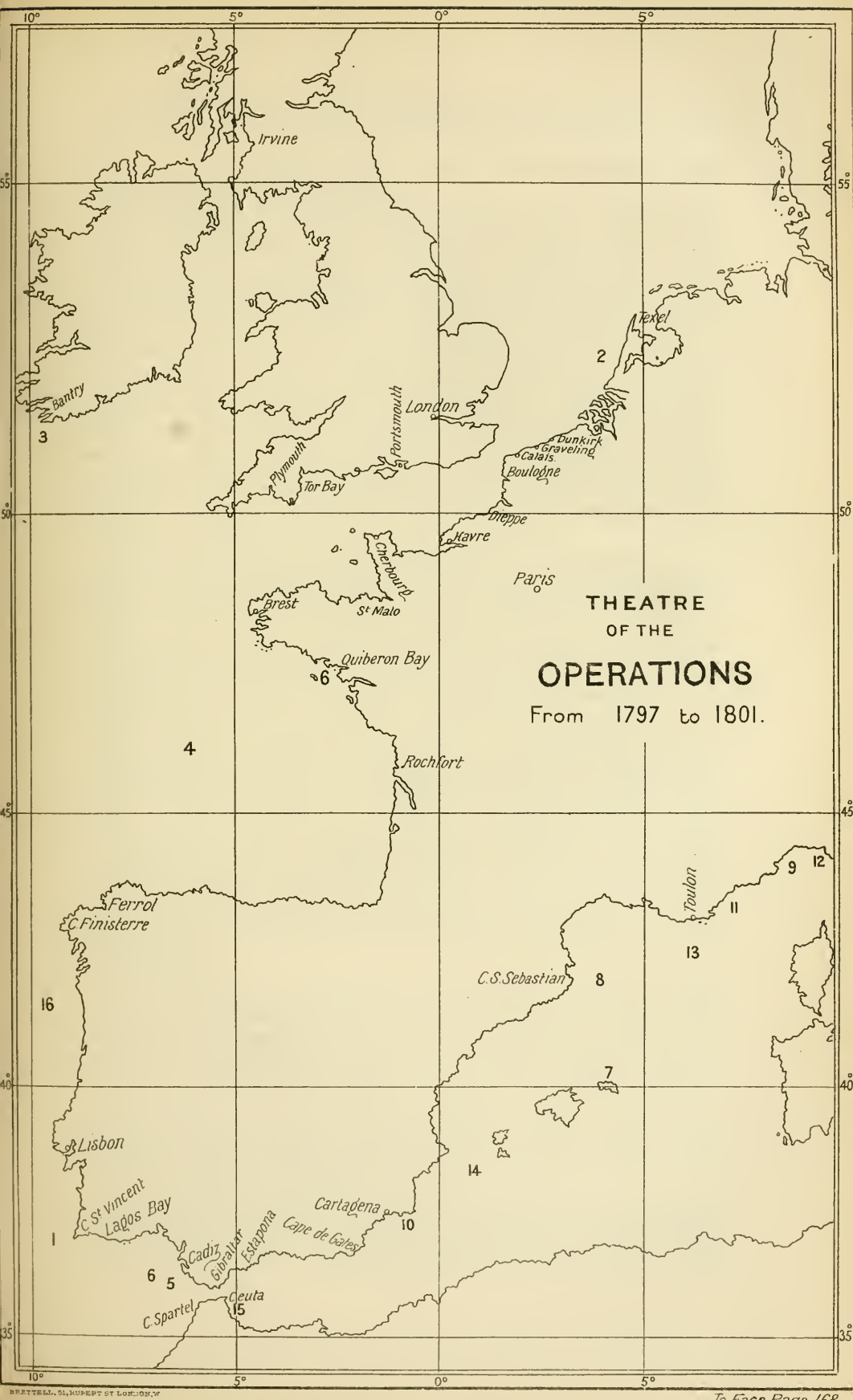
So here was failure upon failure. The very reinforcement which had been detached from the Channel was a dead loss. It had been taken away from the point to be defended, and sent to a point where no attack was to be apprehended; 40 sail of the enemy, and a proportion of frigates, were bowling away to take the command of the Channel and carry the great invasion scheme into execution rolling up the feeble British squadrons as they went, and the only force of a size even to observe him was a fortnight behind the enemy. There was nothing for it but to follow with all speed, and this Lord Keith set himself to do.

The combined fleets, with the fine start which fortune and error more than skill had given them, got into Cadiz on the 12th of July, and were out again on the 21st, making a goodly show of 59 sail, of which 40 were of the line.

Lord Keith's fleet having only partially watered at Port Mahon, was obliged to put into Tetuan to complete with that necessary, and so did not reach Gibraltar until the 29th of July, just three weeks behind the Franco-Spanish fleet, and a week after it had quitted Cadiz for Brest.

While these early and aimless movements had been carried out by the British in the Mediterranean, Lord Bridport had been lying unemployed in Bantry Bay with his 26 sail, waiting for the fleet which never came his way. And thus the retirement north-west of one part, and the retirement south-west of the other part, rendered it an easy matter for the 5 Spanish ships which had got out of Ferrol at the end of April to find their way into Rochefort. But here fortune, which had so far befriended the enemy, deserted him. These 5 ships were never able to rejoin their companions in Brest, and though there were 90 pendants flying there, the little reinforcement of 5 Spaniards was forced back into the port it had sailed from, and lay in Ferrol for the remainder of the year.

The condition of things was now, however, that there was a force at Brest absolutely overwhelming should any ulterior ideas of invasion set it in motion, and far away at the other end of the line the genius which was alone supposed competent to wield it was hurrying back to France, where he did not set foot until the 9th of



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October, which may account for the quiet which subsisted all along the line till the close of the year.

The British were fortunate at the northern end. In spite of the losses of Camperdown, the Dutch fleet remained very strong. There were 8 sail of the line in the Texel, 6 at Amsterdam, and 8 in the Meuse, besides frigates and small vessels. But it was known, on the other hand, that there was a large and growing party in Holland absolutely inimical to Republicanism and French domination. The fleet was less willing than it had been to waste its strength in the endeavour to achieve an object for which it had no liking. The result of these conditions was that when, in the months of August and September, an English land force possessed itself of the Helder, the 8 line-of-battle ships and 2 frigates which were lying in the Texel surrendered to Admiral Mitchell as representing the Prince of Orange, without firing a shot.

The simile which occurs to my mind as best illustrating the various operations all along the enemy's coast, from Toulon to the Helder, is that of a smouldering fire, every now and then breaking out in a fresh quarter, and as often being stamped out by the firemen who were watching it. It was all over at the close of 1799, and all through 1800 it remained apparently subdued, but to be alone likely to break out at Brest, where its real strength lay.

But while men turned their attention in this direction, the fire suddenly blazed in a place altogether beyond the bounds of the old fire. There sprang up a confederacy between the Northern Powers—Russia, Denmark, and Sweden—against England, which was nearly the most alarming incident that had yet developed itself in the course of the great struggle. It is not necessary here to dwell upon the policy and events which brought about the battle of Copenhagen, and broke the confederacy up as rapidly as it had been formed.

This being done, the enemy concentrated his endeavours upon augmenting and improving the invasion flotilla, and in preparing, by exercise and experiment, as far as they could be carried out in the face of constant interruption from crowds of British cruisers, for the day when the great force might cross. The Peace of Amiens, however, put an end for the time to the whole of the operations of every kind, and left this country still uninvaded, still secure, and still in command of the sea.

As I observed on introducing the consideration of the operations on both sides from 1797 to 1805, they were more or less governed by the invasion idea. It is quite possible that the control of this

idea may have been more indirect than direct, but I have felt that if this is even so, some brief study of them is a necessary introduction to the undoubted invasion movements of 1805.

I think that if the outline story I have told be regarded not so much by way of detail as of general effect, it will be seen that the enemy's views were indefinite and generally fallacious throughout; that, having a strong position, he misused it, and that the main cause of his misusing it was the prevalence of the double idea of command of the sea and of something to follow it, as if the command of the sea were not itself all in all. There was, I think, in the mind of the enemy the inconsequent belief that though he might not be strong enough to gain and to hold the command of the sea by direct and simple attack on the forces which then held it, he might be strong enough to achieve purposes which only the command of the sea could enable him to achieve.

And with his mind fixed on these remote and misty purposes, he failed to play the simple but powerful game which a great strategical position and many fortunate chances put into his hands.

We begin with the Franco-Spanish combination in the Mediterranean in 1797, when, by the strange defection of Admiral Mann, St. Vincent was left with only 15 sail face to face with 38. Unless we credit the Allies with a condition of panic fear which should have kept them in their ports, we have nothing to fall back on but some more or less indefinite ulterior purposes for an explanation of why St. Vincent was not instantly fallen upon, or at least followed up and fallen upon, when such very superior force was available. It seems impossible to suppose that had there been a single eye to conquest at sea, such as we have seen to pervade the whole of the Dutch operations in those earlier wars, St. Vincent could have escaped disaster.

And then how can we account for the waste of Spanish force off Cape St. Vincent on the 14th of February? The histories tell us that the Spanish fleet was really bound for Cadiz, and consequently the meeting with the British was for it an untoward accident. But it is exceedingly difficult to believe that any accident could have taken the Spaniards so very far west of their intended port. The battle of St. Vincent appears more likely to have arisen out of the vague and unsettled views which seem to have characterized the whole proceedings of the Allies.

In like manner there is no explanation forthcoming which bears sound sense in its wake for the waste of Dutch force at the battle of Camperdown. It was *apropos* of nothing, and could lead to

nothing more than mutual loss and bloodshed, and the causes of it seem to lie more amongst passionate reactions after the collapse of the invasion idea, than amongst any of the cold designs of a reasonable State policy.

In a somewhat wild way, Napoleon's adventure to Egypt with a "wing of the army of England" was intended to have a direct effect on ultimate command of the Channel, but in drawing the fleet with the land expedition, Napoleon was repeating the mistake of Medina Sidonia, and the intended mistake of Conflans. Force enough to cover the landing, which would probably have been a frigate force, was all that was necessary. The French may be said to have courted the fate which overtook them at the Nile, which was a much less severe one than would have overtaken the whole force had Nelson only followed up the sight he got of them on the evening of the 22nd of June, after leaving Cape Passaro.* Had the French line-of-battle fleet been left at Toulon, Nelson would probably have been unable to quit his watch of them, and the whole course of affairs might have been changed. At the most, the proper employment of the French line-of-battle force would have been masking the British near Gibraltar or Cadiz.

Passing on to the exit of Admiral Bruix from Brest in April 1799, and the movements and combinations that followed, a single eye to the destruction of any one of the three British squadrons, Lord Keith's, Duckworth's, or Nelson's, must certainly have brought about an attack which should have promised success. Bruix arranged his orders as Minister of Marine and carried them out as Commander-in-Chief. What those orders actually were has not yet, I believe, been shown, but they certainly involved a number of possibilities. Possibly Keith was to be attacked; so, possibly, was Minorca and Duckworth; so also, possibly, was Nelson. Possibly Malta was to be relieved. Possibly Napoleon, in Egypt, was to be succoured. Something of the total failure to do anything whatever no doubt followed on the want of seamanship, which was general in both of the Allied fleets; but, to my mind, much more lies on the shoulders of the false notions of naval warfare which pervaded the minds of the Continental nations. If there had been a single design of crushing the 15 sail of Lord Keith off Cadiz, with the 25 sail outside him and the 17 or 18 sail inside him, might it not have been carried out? Though a gale of wind was blowing, it was not necessary that it should have carried the French up to and past Cadiz; care might have been taken to delay

* Nelson's *Despatches*, vol. iii., p. 43.

the approach, by lying-to till the wind abated. Or when the junction was ultimately effected at Cartagena, what was there but these same ulterior purposes to have prevented the carrying out of any decided programme which had for its object the destruction of British naval force in the Mediterranean?

And then, the last movement of all, the combined return to Brest, was clearly a false one. The strength of the strategic position consisted wholly in the division of the Allied fleets in secure ports whence, under direction from a central station, they could issue and strike in combination on the isolated squadrons which their presence in port compelled the masters of the sea to keep in watch upon them. It was their sudden issue and their unexpected stroke which gave them their power; as soon as their fleets were concentrated in one port, the danger to the masters of the sea had passed away, for they could concentrate too, and were no longer open to unexpected attacks by superior forces. Quite possibly this knowledge only arrived to those who were directing the movements of the Allied fleets when too late, and when it was clear that by their concentration in one port they had ceased to become of any account during the remainder of the war.

CHAPTER IX.

Attempts to Gain the Command of the Sea with Definite Ulterior Purpose (*Continued*).—The Last Attempt of France.

Preparation from 1803 to 1805 to gain temporary command of the sea.—The British defence.—Napoleon's plans and orders.—Invasion does not occupy the first place.—The early failures of 1805.—Villeneuve's West Indian Expedition, and Nelson's prevention of its success.—Varying and indefinite orders to Villeneuve.—Return of the British and French squadrons to Europe.—Villeneuve's failure and the final abandonment of the invasion scheme.—Doubts whether it was ever really intended.—Attempts to gain command of the sea too serious and difficult to be considered side by side with any other design.

When Napoleon dismissed the British ambassador at the outbreak of hostilities in 1803, he informed him frankly that his main object would be to invade the country, but at the same time expressed a sense of the recklessness of the idea, and a belief that a great disaster to the French arms might follow the attempt. Ostensibly, from the outbreak of war in May 1803 until the 23rd of August 1805, every naval preparation and every naval movement had to do with obtaining the command of the Channel for a sufficient time to allow an immense army, embarked in an immense flotilla of small vessels, to cross from the French to the English coast.

Lord St. Vincent was then at the head of the Admiralty, and the nature of the situation as it was understood in England, together with the naval arrangements for meeting it, may be shortly stated.

At Toulon and Cadiz there were known to be of French not more than 10 sail of the line, 4 frigates, and 2 smaller vessels. To look after them was Nelson, with 14 sail of the line, 11 frigates, and 21 smaller vessels.

At Ferrol were 5 sail of the line and 2 frigates, and to mask them were despatched of British ships, 7 sail of the line, 2 frigates, and 2 smaller vessels.

At Rochefort, and near it, were 4 sail of the line, 5 frigates, and 2 smaller vessels. To watch them were stationed 5 sail of the line, 1 frigate, and 1 smaller vessel.

At Brest, the enemy mustered 18 sail of the line, 6 frigates, and 1 smaller vessel. Lord Cornwallis was here with 20 sail of the line, 5 frigates, and 6 smaller vessels.

This coast and these ports were furnished with the naval forces of the enemy in the usual character. From St. Malo to the Texel, the ports, besides containing the usual war vessels, were full of the invasion flotilla, which had now been in preparation for about eight years and was in a pretty forward state.

In the Texel were 4 Dutch sail of the line, with a frigate and 120 of the flotilla vessels; and in the various ports, as far as Dunkirk, there was 1 line-of-battle ship, 4 frigates, 7 smaller vessels, and 645 of the invasion flotilla.

To watch these various ports, the British stationed 9 sail of the line, 7 frigates, and 14 small vessels.

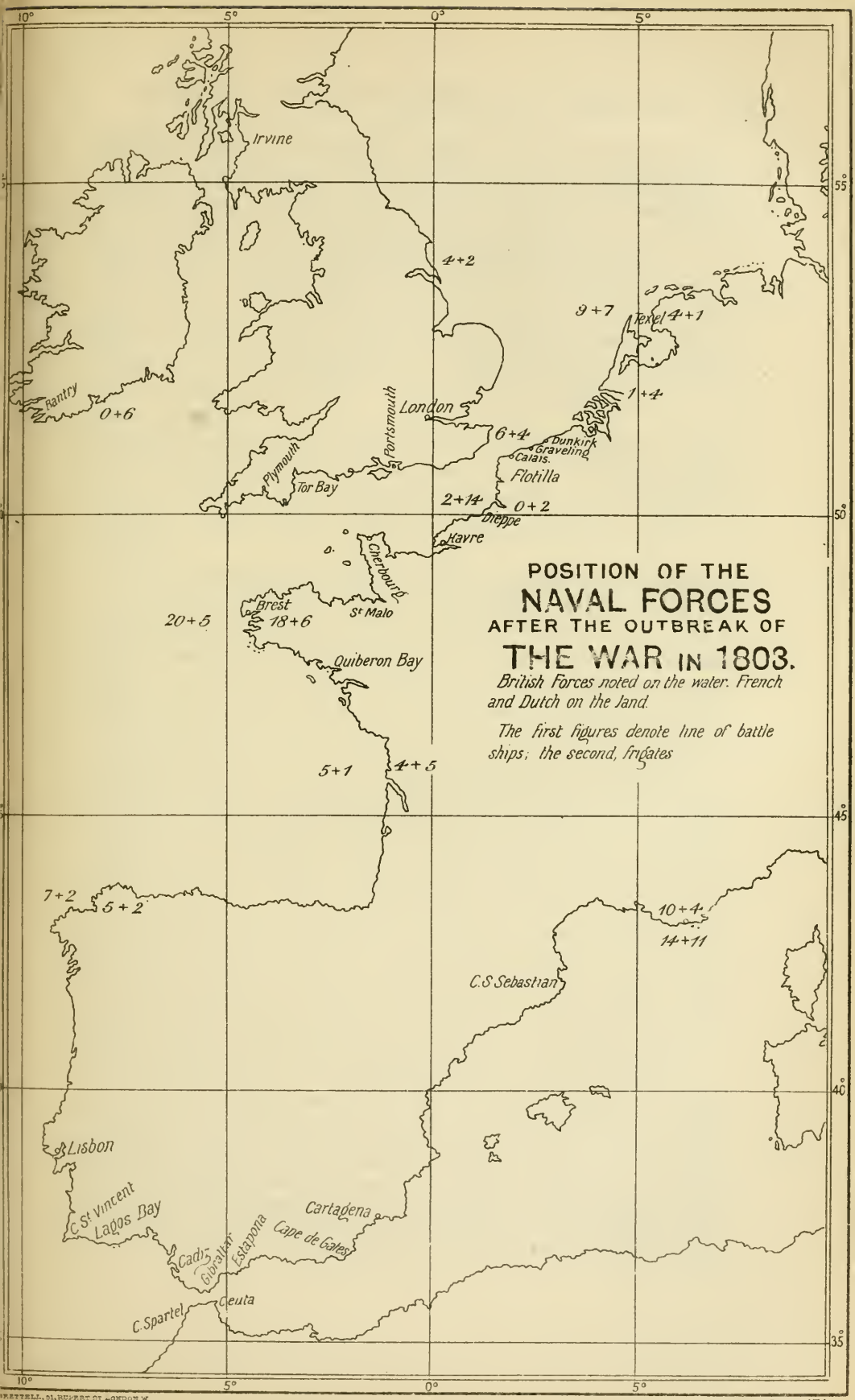
In the more westerly ports, including Boulogne, Havre, Cherbourg, &c., the enemy had 2 frigates, 7 smaller vessels, and 120 gun-brigs for the service of the invasion, and about 1,450 of the flotilla itself.

The British watched these with 2 sail of the line (small 50's), 14 frigates, and 40 smaller vessels.

As an inner defence, 6 sail of the line, 4 frigates, and 19 smaller vessels were stationed in the Downs. Six frigates, and 11 smaller vessels were stationed to guard the coasts of Ireland, while at Hollesley Bay, at Yarmouth, the Humber, Leith, and generally along the coasts of England and Scotland were 4 line-of-battle ships, 2 frigates, and 20 smaller vessels.*

In July 1804, the French plans were drawing to completion, and Vice-Admiral Latouche-Treville was appointed to command the entire force. Napoleon then began to sketch out roughly and vaguely what was before his Commander-in-Chief to accomplish. Apparently, this object was more direct than it afterwards became, Latouche-Treville was to complete his squadron at Toulon, and to man it by disarming corvettes, by pressing men at Marseilles, and by embarking 1,600 soldiers to serve afloat. He was to reflect on the great enterprise which he was about to carry out, and before

* See Tucker's *Life of Earl St. Vincent*, vol. ii., p. 218.



POSITION OF THE NAVAL FORCES AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR IN 1803.

British Forces noted on the water. French and Dutch on the land.

The first figures denote line of battle ships; the second, frigates

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Napoleon signed his definitive orders he was to let him know what he considered to be the most effective way of executing them.

The squadron at Rochefort, according to Napoleon, consisted of 5 sail of the line and 4 frigates, ready to weigh at a moment, and there were only five of the enemy's vessels before the port.

The Brest squadron was 21 sail of the line, under orders to harass the enemy, and oblige him to keep a great number of ships before the port. The enemy had six ships before the Texel, blockading the Dutch squadron of 3 ships of the line, 4 frigates, and a convoy of 30 ships, on board of which Marmont had his army embarked.

Between Etaples, Boulogne, Vimereux, and Ambleteuse, there were 1,800 gun-boats, gun-vessels, *péniches*, &c., carrying 120,000 men and 10,000 horses. "Let us be masters of the Straits for six hours," was Napoleon's dictum, "and we shall be masters of the world."

The enemy had before Ostend, before Boulogne, and in the Downs, two 74's, three 64's, and two 50's. Until now, Cornwallis had not had more than 15 sail of the line with him, but all the reserves in Portsmouth and Plymouth would be sent to reinforce him before Brest. The enemy had at Cork four or five war-ships, not to mention frigates and small vessels, of which there were great numbers.

If [said Napoleon to Latouche-Treville] you evade Nelson, he will go to Sicily, or to Egypt, or to Ferrol. I do not think it will be necessary for you to go to Ferrol. Of the five vessels now in port there, four only are ready; the fifth, however, will be ready by the middle of August; but I think that Ferrol is too clearly pointed at; it is so natural to suppose that if your squadron passes out of the Mediterranean into the ocean, it is intended to raise the blockade of Ferrol. It appears better, therefore, to pass wide of it, and to arrive off Rochefort. This will make your squadron up to 16 sail of the line and 11 frigates, and then, without anchoring, without losing a single instant, whether in passing round Ireland, keeping well clear of it, or in executing the first plan, to present yourself before Boulogne. Our Brest squadron, 23 sail of the line strong, will have an army embarked, and will be always ready to sail; so that Cornwallis will be compelled to hug the coast of Brittany to prevent its escape. For the rest, to fix my ideas on this operation, which has its risks, but of which the success offers such immense results, I wait for the plan which you have mentioned to me, and which you will send me by the return of my courier. You must take on board as much provisions as possible, so that under no circumstances shall you be hindered.

At the end of the month a new line-of-battle ship will be launched at Rochefort, and one at Lorient. It may be possible that they will be ready; there is no question about the one at Rochefort, but if the one at Lorient should be in the Roads and has not been able to pass out before your appearance off the Isle d'Aix, I wish to know if you think you should go out of your way to pick her up. Nevertheless, I think that if you get out with a good northerly wind, it is preferable on all grounds to carry out the operation before the winter; for, in the bad season it is possible you may have more chances of arriving, but there may be several days such that advantage cannot be taken of your arrival. Supposing that you can put to sea before the 29th of July,

it is probable that you will appear before Boulogne in the course of September, when the nights are already reasonably long, and the weather does not continue bad for any time.*

The Toulon squadron, however, did not get to sea as Napoleon hoped. Latouche-Treville died on the 10th of August, but as late as the 28th no successor had been named, and Napoleon was hesitating between Bruix, Villeneuve, and Rosily, and considering it most urgent to come to a decision which ultimately dictated the choice of Villeneuve.

Presumably the delay had put aside all thoughts of proceeding according to the plans of Latouche-Treville during this year; not only so, but the plans seem to have become entirely altered, and the main design of gaining the command of the Channel began to take a co-ordinate place, if not indeed a subordinate place, with designs against St. Helena and the West Coast of Africa, against the British possessions in the West Indies, and against Ireland.

We have [said Napoleon, writing to Decrès, the Minister of Marine, on the 29th of September 1804] three expeditions to carry out.

First Expedition.—(1) To put Martinique, Guadaloupe, and St. Lucia, in a position of safety under all circumstances. For this purpose a reinforcement of 1,500 men is required, with 4,000 muskets and 100,000 cartridges. (2) To take possession of Dominica and St. Lucia, which will materially assist in placing Guadaloupe and Martinique in safety. A thousand men will be required for the garrison of these two islands. Total for the first expedition. 3,500 men. The Rochefort squadron is destined for this expedition, which will be commanded by General of Division Lagrange.

Second Expedition.—(1) To take Surinam and the other Dutch colonies; I think we cannot send from Europe less than 4.000 men for this service, who cannot reasonably be expected to be more than 3,600 when we shall have completed the conquest. (2) To take succours to St. Domingo. For this, 1,200 men, 2,000 muskets, and 25,000 cartridges will be required. If the Dutch colonies resist, and we lose more men than we expect, the succours to be taken to St. Domingo will be less. Total for the second expedition, from 5,200 to 5.600 men.

Third Expedition.—To take St. Helena, and to establish a station there for several months. For this purpose 1,200 to 1,500 men will be required. The expedition to St. Helena will take 200 men to the support of Senegal, will retake Goree, will follow up all the British establishments along the coast of Africa, which will be put under contribution and burnt.

For this purpose, the fleet at Toulon, comprising 11 or 12 sail of the line, including the ship which is at Cadiz, will start first. Reaching the ocean, it will detach 2 ships of the line, 4 frigates, and 2 brigs, the best sailers, for the expedition to St. Helena (these 2 line-of-battle ships, 4 frigates, and 2 brigs will carry 1.800 men, of whom 200 will be left at Goree and Senegal), and 9 or 10 sail of the line and 3 frigates, carrying 5,000 or 6.000 men will proceed direct to Guiana, where they will find Victor Hugues, and then proceed to Surinam.

* *Précis des Evénemens Militaires.* Par M. le Comte Mathieu Dumas, vol. xi., p. 198.

As soon as it is known that the fleet at Toulon has put to sea, the Rochefort squadron will receive orders to sail. It will proceed direct to Martinique, take possession of St. Lucia and Dominica, and put itself under the orders of the commander of the squadron destined for Surinam. This squadron, now consisting of 14 or 15 sail of the line and 7 or 8 frigates, will put all the British islands under contribution, take all the prizes possible, presenting itself before every roadstead, arrive before St. Domingo, put ashore there 1,000 or 1,200 men, arms and ammunition according to requirement, carry out its return to Ferrol, raise the blockade of our 5 sail of the line, and with 20 sail of line proceed to Rochefort.

It appears to me that all is ready for these expeditions. To the squadron at Toulon, to the expedition to Surinam and to the squadron at Rochefort, there should be added a certain number of brigs and small vessels, as much for the service of the expeditions as to be left at Martinique and Surinam. Thus, supposing the expeditions should be able to start during Brumaire (October 22nd to November 20th), it may be hoped that before Germinal (March 20th to April 19th) our fleet may effect its return to Rochefort.

Admiral Villeneuve will command the expedition to Surinam; Rear-Admiral Missiessy will command that to Martinique; choose a good rear-admiral to command that to St. Helena. . . . .

The English will find themselves attacked simultaneously in Asia,* Africa, and America; and accustomed as they are for so long to feel none of the effects of war, these succesive shocks at their various centres of commerce will make them experience the evidence of their weakness. . . . .†

I have made you acquainted with the manner in which I regard my three expeditions—Surinam, Demarara, Esquibo, St. Helena, and Dominica. In this dispatch I give you my views on Ireland. One of the six transports must be withdrawn and replaced by the armed store-ships *La Pensée* or *La Romaine*; the *Ocean* must be completed by working, if necessary, by torchlight. I think it is the only way of being able to carry 18,000 men, of which 3,000 are cavalry, artillery, engineers, and non-combatants, and 15,000 infantry; 500 horses, of which 200 are for the cavalry, 200 for the artillery, and 100 for the staff. Less than this would not form a *corps d'armée*.

The place of landing which you indicate, appears to me the most convenient. The north of the Bay of Lough Swilly is, in my view, the most advantageous point. We must quit Brest, pass round Ireland, out of sight of the coast, and make it again as a ship coming from Newfoundland would. In speaking thus, I speak politically, not nautically, for the currents must decide the point at which the land is to be attacked. Politically, it would be better to threaten [*s'exposer*] to attack Scotland than to attack farther south. This plan will disconcert the enemy. Thirty-six hours after anchoring they must put to sea again, leaving the brigs and all the transports. . . . On all these matters I am in accord with you; but the landing in Ireland is only a preliminary act. If it were an operation by itself alone, we should run great risks. The squadron should then, after strengthening itself with all the good seamen in the six transports, enter the Channel and appear before Cherbourg, there to receive information as to the situation of the ships before Boulogne, and cover [*favoriser*] the passage of the flotilla. If, on arrival at Boulogne, the winds should be unfavourable for several days and oblige the squadron to pass the Straits, it should proceed to the Texel. There it would find 7 Dutch sail of the line with 27,000 men embarked; it should take them under its escort, and convey them to Ireland.

One of these two operations ought to succeed, and then, whether I have 30,000 or 40,000 men in Ireland, or whether I am both in England and Ireland, the success of the war is with us.

* Alluding to the operations of Admiral Linois.

† *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi., p. 205.

When the squadron shall have left Brest, Lord Cornwallis will go to watch for it in Ireland. When he knows of the landing in the north, he will return to await the squadron at Brest. We must not return thither. If, in leaving Ireland, our fleet should find the wind favourable, it might double Scotland, and so present itself at the Texel. When it leaves Brest, the 120,000 men will be embarked at Boulogne, and the 25,000 in the Texel. They should remain embarked during the whole period of the expedition to Ireland.

It is in this way that I look on the expedition to Ireland. Thus I approve the whole of the first part of the project up to the landing in Ireland. I shall await the report which I have asked you for, to come to a decision on the laying up of the other parts of the flotilla.

The second part of the project should be the subject of your consideration, and that of the Admiral.

I think that the starting of the expedition from Toulon, and of the expedition from Rochefort, should precede the departure of that for Ireland; for the escape of these 20 ships will oblige them (the English) to dispatch more than 30. The departure of 10,000 or 12,000 men, which they will well know to have gone, will oblige them to send troops to the most important points. If things turn out according to our wishes, I desire that the Toulon fleet should put to sea on October 12th; that of Rochefort before November 1st; and that of Brest before November 21st.*

In these two despatches of Napoleon, written on the same day, we have a second set of plans, in which on the one side the expeditions to the West Indies have their objective there, and apparently little or no connection with the invasion project, which is made to hang upon the success of a considerable landing in the north of Ireland.† But shining through both schemes there is the principle of an endeavour to occupy the attention of the British in distant quarters, so that a comparatively small naval force will suffice to command the Channel for a time long enough to permit the flotilla to cross.

We have seen that the July plan, under which the Toulon fleet was directly to act as cover to the flotilla, has wholly disappeared. We must now note that the Irish plan of September, above sketched, was also given up, possibly in view of the approaching Spanish alliance, possibly because it was found not so easy for the Brest fleet to get to sea unwatched, as it had been supposed.

A convention was agreed to on the 4th of January 1805 between the Emperor and the King of Spain, in which the former set out the forces under his hand as follows:—

In the Texel, 30,000 men, with the necessary war-ships and transports.

* Napoleon to Decrès, September 29th, 1804. *Précis des Evénemens Militaires* vol. xi., p. 212.

† James (*Naval History*, vol. iii., p. 213) assumes that Napoleon intended that Villeneuve, after his return to Rochefort, should join the Brest fleet so as together to cover the invasion. I cannot find any grounds for such an assumption.

At Ostend, Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, and Havre, a flotilla and transport suitable to 120,000 men and 25,000 horses.

At Brest, a fleet of 21 sail of the line, several frigates and transports, prepared to embark 25,000 men in camp at Brest.

At Rochefort, 6 sail of the line and 4 frigates, anchored in Aix Roads, and having on board 4,000 troops.

At Toulon, 11 sail of the line, 8 frigates, and transports, having on board 9,000 troops.

Spain was asked to provide :—

At Ferrol, 8 sail of the line, or 7 at least, and 4 frigates, designed to combine their operations with the 5 French sail of the line and 2 frigates which were then in that port; 2,000 infantry, and 200 artillery, with 10 guns, were to be assembled, and the whole were to be ready for sea on the 20th of March, or, at latest, by the 30th of March.

At Cadiz, 15 sail of the line, or at least 12, were to be prepared ready to sail on March 30th, with 2,000 infantry, 100 artillery, and 400 cavalry, without their horses.

At Cartagena, 6 sail of the line were to be ready by the same date.

The Spanish ambassador, while signing the convention, was of opinion that though the ships could be got ready by the time named, they would neither be manned nor provisioned so soon.

Villeneuve's instructions were now modified to admit of his being joined by the Spanish ships at Cadiz, and also, as it appears, in abandoning the St. Helena expedition. Otherwise, the views of the Emperor, as expressed in his dispatch of 29th September 1804, regarding the Toulon and Rochefort squadrons, remained in force. The destination of the Brest squadron, now under Vice-Admiral Ganteaume, was however altered, and Villeneuve was to expect to meet it in the West Indies.*

* James has not noticed this. But it is clear from several of the Emperor's dispatches. On the 21st April 1805, he wrote to Decrès: "The non-departure of Ganteaume troubles me much." On the 23rd of April he says he has sent a courier to Brest, to inform Ganteaume that Nelson had gone to seek Villeneuve in Egypt, and he says: "Pray God that my courier may not find him at Brest!" On the same day, having heard that Ganteaume had not yet sailed, he expresses his impatience, and recommends sending out a succession of advice brigs and schooners to keep Villeneuve informed, and to recommend him "to do all the harm he can to the enemy, pending the arrival of General Ganteaume. . . . You perceive that the squadron of Admiral Ganteaume arriving, the force will be augmented by more than 2,000 men, which will keep me master in all those countries." It was only when the impossibility of Ganteaume's avoidance of Cornwallis became manifest that the plan was changed, and that Villeneuve was to relieve him by raising the blockade. On May 8th, Napoleon settled

The first moves under these conditions were made in January. Villeneuve at Toulon, with his 11 sail of the line and his 6,500 troops, taking advantage of Nelson's absence at the Madalena Islands,* put to sea on the 17th of the month. Missiessy, evading the blockading squadron of Sir Thomas Graves, got away with his 5 sail of the line and his 3,400 troops eight days later, and made straight for Martinique, in the West Indies. He ravaged the British West India Islands with ease and impunity, and loaded himself with their spoils.†

But early in March, at Martinique, he got a piece of news which told him that Villeneuve's move had miscarried; and also orders to return to Europe. He made sail there and then, and, being the luckiest of all the French admirals, voyaged home as he had voyaged out, without the least check or impediment, and anchored in Aix Roads on the 20th of May.

But his move had been an absolutely useless one, so far as the general current of the game went. He had taken a pawn and returned to his own square. Allemand succeeded him in the command, and thenceforward that squadron had no influence on events.

Ganteaume, with his 21 sail of the line and his 3,500 troops, made more than one attempt to get away from Brest, but the British, being augmented to an equal or even superior force to his own, and he himself being under necessarily positive orders not to get into action, he never made a real move, but lay blocked on his own square from the first to the last.

The interest of the game at once centres on the false move which Villeneuve made from Toulon on the 17th of January, and it must be told how it came to be false.

Nelson had a horror of the Gulf of Lyons and the coasts about Toulon. He knew no spot so subject to gales of wind, and was in a constant dread of being caught with disabled ships by the enemy issuing from Toulon. Discovery had been made of an excellent anchorage, thereupon named Agincourt Road, sheltered by the Madalena Islands. The Road was not 200 miles from Toulon, and there Nelson, on the 11th of January, had retired to refit and provision, leaving a couple of frigates to look out on Toulon. On the

that if Ganteaume could not get out before the 20th of May he was not to attempt to move, but to wait for the appearance of Villeneuve.—See *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi. *Pièces Justificatives*, passim.

* A group forming part of the southern shore of the Straits of Bonifacio.

† 100,000 fr. from Roseau (Charlotte-town), 192,000 fr. from St. Kitts, 89,000 fr. from Monserat. Troude, vol. iii., p. 334.

19th, one of these frigates ran off Madalena, and reported, by signal, that Villeneuve was at sea. The British fleet was under way in a couple of hours after the receipt of the signal, and running down the east coast of Sardinia.

No one on the English side had yet fathomed Napoleon's plans. Nelson's mind was full of his old trials and difficulties—Naples, Sicily, and Egypt; these were, with him, the only places to which the enemy could be bound, and though he did not entirely exclude from his mind the possibility that Villeneuve meant to pass out of the Mediterranean, he did not give that possibility its full weight.*

It blew a furious south-westerly gale on the 20th of January, so that, though the ships were sheltered by a weather shore, they were under storm sails. I am not clear how it was that this circumstance, combined with others, did not put Nelson's mind into the right channel, and so save him a weary and heart-breaking journey. The gale ceased and the wind shifted, but Nelson was still off the south end of Sardinia, dispatching his limited numbers of frigates in all directions in search of intelligence. But there was none until the 26th, and then word was brought that on the 19th one of Villeneuve's line-of-battle ships, with her topmasts gone, had been seen making for shelter off the west coast of Corsica. The inference to be drawn from this piece of news was not drawn, and Nelson steered for Stromboli, off which island he spent a wakeful night on the 28th, watching its fires of unusual brilliancy. Still persuaded that history was repeating itself in his case, and being assured of the safety of Naples, he passed on to Palermo and Messina. Then, admitting the possibility of an alternative, and finding no evidence beyond a total absence of intelligence, he stood over to the Morea, and afterwards saw the land of Egypt on the 4th of February.

He now found himself utterly wrong. Not in Egypt, not in any part of the Eastern Mediterranean was the prey he was sighing for. This was worse than the first visit to Egypt, for he had pushed on there this time without a shred of real evidence to guide him. No one had seen or heard of the French fleet east of Sardinia, and it was now certain that it had never been in that direction at all. There was nothing for it but to retrace his steps, with all the speed possible. At Malta, on the 19th of February, Nelson learnt that Villeneuve, having put to sea on the 17th of

* Napoleon's prescience of Nelson's views and probable proceedings, mentioned on a previous page, is a striking illustration of his genius.

January, had passed but a very little way to the southward when he was met by the furious south-westerly gale which Nelson had felt off the east coast of Sardinia, and had been driven back into Toulon, where he had anchored on the 20th.

Nelson's return journey was pursued, and on the 27th of February he anchored at Cagliari to water his fleet. On the 12th of March he was off Toulon again, making sure that the enemy was actually in port. A few days later he detached a single line-of-battle ship to Barcelona, to give colour to a report that he was off the Spanish coast, while he himself turned to the south-eastward to Palmas Bay, in the south of Sardinia, where the victuallers and store ships had been ordered to assemble to supply the wants of the exhausted squadron.

There, or in a neighbouring anchorage, the British lay from the 27th of March till the 3rd of April. They then weighed and stood to the southward. The next day, when the squadron had made but very little way, the wind shifted to the N.N.W., and very soon one of the frigates which had been left to watch Toulon, the *Phœbe*, hove in sight with the signal flying that the enemy was again at sea. Nelson, still full of Sardinia, Naples, and Egypt, hove to midway between Sardinia and the African coast for the night, spreading his look-out ships north and south, to prevent the French passing to the eastward without his knowing it. The other frigate available, the *Active*, had been left by the *Phœbe* to follow up the French and bring word of their movements. She missed them on the night of the 31st of March. They were then sixty miles only from Toulon, steering S.S.W. for Minorca. This news had no effect on Nelson's pre-conceptions. He was back at Palermo on the 10th of April, but the absence of intelligence there at length awoke him to the possibility that the design of the French had never been eastwards at all, and that they might already have passed out of the Mediterranean, have swallowed up Sir John Orde's detachment off Cadiz, and have done whatever mischief it was their intention to do. But the wind now turned and blew from the westward, and then on the 16th of April Nelson received certain intelligence that on the 7th of April the French had been seen off Cape de Gata, steering towards the Straits of Gibraltar.

On the 18th Nelson made up his mind to follow the French fleet, wherever it had gone to. He now learnt that Villeneuve had actually passed the Straits on the 8th; but, owing to the persistent foul wind, the British did not see Gibraltar until the 30th,

and it was not till the 4th of May that they were able to anchor at the usual watering-place, Tetuan, on the African coast, to fill up with that necessary. A change of wind next day brought out all Nelson's eagerness, and with ships unsupplied he made sail for Lagos Bay, where it was expected to meet victuallers and store ships. That anchorage was reached on the 10th of May, and there Nelson learnt that Villeneuve's destination was certainly the West Indies. Nelson, remarking that "Salt beef and the French fleet was preferable to roast beef and champagne without them," started after the enemy for Barbados on the 11th of May.

I may now usefully bring together chronologically the movements of this duel, up to the time of Villeneuve's arrival in the West Indies.

March 29th.—Villeneuve sails from Toulon.* Nelson is at anchor in Palmas Bay.

March 31st.—The *Phœbe* and *Active* see the French fleet thirty-five miles south of Toulon; they follow it, steering S.S.W. till sunset, when the *Phœbe* leaves the *Active* to follow up the French, and herself makes for Palmas Bay to report to Nelson. Nelson still at Palmas Bay.

April 1st.—The *Active* having steered S.W. during the night, finds herself alone in the morning, and makes sail after Nelson. Villeneuve having been under the impression—created by Nelson's *ruse* of sending a ship off Barcelona—that he was off the Spanish Coast, now learns that he was off the south end of Sardinia on the 27th of March; he thereupon alters his course so as to pass inside of the Balearic Islands. Nelson moves from Palmas Bay to Pula for water.

April 3rd.—Nelson puts to sea with the intention of proceeding to Toulon. Villeneuve is steering for Cartagena.

April 4th.—Nelson is off the south end of Sardinia; the wind has shifted to N.N.W., and the *Phœbe* makes her report. Nelson spreads his ships between the south point of Sardinia and the coast of Africa.

April 6th.—Villeneuve arrives off Cartagena; offers to escort the six Spanish sail there to Cadiz; the Spaniards decline. Nelson still watching between Sardinia and Africa.

April 7th.—Villeneuve, with a fresh easterly breeze, starts for the Straits of Gibraltar. Nelson makes for Palermo.

* Troude says 30th; and that the troops carried were reduced to 3,350 men. Vol. iii., p. 340.

April 8th.—Villeneuve passes through the Straits, and anchors at Cadiz. Nelson on his way to Palermo.

April 9th.—Villeneuve sails from Cadiz with 12 French and 5 Spanish sail of the line, leaving a sixth Spanish line-of-battle-ship, which had been on shore, to follow. Nelson still on his way to Palermo.

April 10th.—Villeneuve at sea, on his way to Martinique. Nelson off Palermo, with no news.

April 16th.—Villeneuve at sea. Nelson, beating to the westward round the south point of Sardinia, gets news that the French had passed the Straits on the 8th.

May 4th.—Villeneuve within nine days' sail of Martinique. Nelson anchors in Mazarri Bay, Tetuan.

May 5th.—Villeneuve within eight days' sail of Martinique. Nelson sails from Mazarri Bay, with no more news.

May 10th.—Villeneuve within three days' sail of Martinique. Nelson anchors in Lagos Bay.

May 12th.—Villeneuve within a day's sail of Martinique. Nelson sails from Lagos Bay for Barbados.

May 13th.—Villeneuve arrives at Martinique. Nelson is within two days' sail of Madeira.

Nelson was in sight of Madeira on the 15th of May. The fleet had been going 10 knots, and he thought they had been very fortunate since quitting Cape St. Vincent, and would be in time to secure Jamaica, which he considered the objective of the French. Others thought of Surinam and Trinidad; but no one had any conception of the great strategic plan which was formulated, or the least idea that Nelson might be doing that which more than anything else tended, on the face of things, to further Napoleon's schemes. The points most against the Emperor were Nelson's speed and its moral effect.

It would appear that Villeneuve's orders must have been modified between his first and second sailing from Toulon.

I have re-read [writes the Emperor to Decrès on the 30th April] with attention the instructions given to Admiral Villeneuve. I suppose that he will arrive at Martinique the 15th of this month,* and that then he will leave to proceed to St. Domingo, from thence to the bay of St. Iago on June 9th, remain there 20 days, and afterwards go to Cadiz.† If Admiral Mazon sails before the 10th or 15th of May he will take him orders to wait 35 days, and then to proceed by the shortest route to Ferrol. Admiral Mazon will not arrive before the 4th or 9th of June, and Admiral Villeneuve would

* Floréal. That is the 5th of May.

† I can find no explanation for this curious statement, which seems contradictory to most of what had gone before and came after.

have to wait till the 19th of July, and would not appear before Ferrol until the 18th of August. . . . If Admiral Mazon has not yet sailed, you must write to him that in the letter which Admiral Mazon takes it is said that he should remain 35 days; but it was hoped that Admiral Mazon would have left a fortnight earlier; that my intention is that he should not stay at Martinique beyond July 4th.*

On the 8th of May, Napoleon drew up two sets of draft instructions for Villeneuve; and it is only for the first time in these instructions that the idea of gaining the command of the Channel seems to take that overwhelming position which, if it really occupied the Emperor's mind, was all along its due.

The direction which you should take after your junction at Ferrol depends on so many different circumstances, that I can only leave it to your experience at sea and your zeal for my service. In fact, many things have come to pass since your departure for Martinique; the knowledge of the enemy's force which you have drawn to America, the strength of the squadron at Ferrol, and of the enemy's fleet before the port, the condition of your fleet, are so many necessary elements regulating imperiously your ulterior destination.

The principal end of the whole operation is to give us, for some days, a superiority before Boulogne. Masters of the Straits for four days, 150,000 men embarked in 2,000 vessels will entirely complete the expedition. To achieve this great end, immediately after your appearance at Ferrol you will have four courses open to you.

The first, to proceed to Rochefort, and to join the 5 sail of the line which I have in that roadstead.† I have sent instructions to the *Regulus*, which is at Lorient, to join you, and thus with 25 French and 15 Spanish sail of the line, to make your junction with the Brest squadron, and then with 60 sail of the line to pass into the Channel.

The second plan is to pass by the Rochefort squadron, which engages the attention of an equal number of the enemy, and to direct your steps as promptly as possible on Brest to effect your junction with Admiral Ganteaume.

The third plan would be, after your junction with the squadron at Ferrol, to pass round Ireland to join with the squadron in the Texel, seven sail of the line strong, with its convoy, and to proceed before Boulogne.

The fourth plan appears to be to make for the Lizard, and when 30 leagues off it to take advantage of a westerly wind to run along the coast of England to avoid encountering the squadron which blockades Brest, and to arrive at Boulogne four or five days before it.

For either of these operations, in taking account of the provisions which you will find on board the French and Spanish ships, and those which you will find at Rochefort, you will be sufficiently provided; and having long foreseen your expedition, I have caused a great quantity to be prepared at Brest, Cherbourg, and Boulogne.

If you adopt the plan of forming a junction with the Brest squadron, you should endeavour to do so without fighting; but if this proves too difficult, arrange to fight as near Brest as possible, and to this end deceive the enemy by false movements, should he, on learning your arrival at Ferrol adopt the plan of advancing 20 leagues or so to encounter you. If, on the contrary, you adopt the plan of passing round Ireland, you should pass out of sight of the coast, and keep your route as much from the knowledge of the enemy as possible, who will for a time believe

* *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi., p. 237.

† Nevertheless on the 13th of May, when he believed that this squadron had returned from the West Indies, Napoleon was urgent on Decrès to send it back again. *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi., p. 260.

you have returned to the Mediterranean, which report we shall not fail to use all means to spread.

Admiral Ganteaume, with 21 sail of the line provisioned for six months, is anchored outside the Goulet, between Bertheaume and Camaret, under the protection of batteries mounting more than 100 guns. From the moment of your arrival at Ferrol, he will be ready to sail; he is more ready to do so than from any other position inside the Goulet. . . .

If you pass round Ireland, you will go to the Texel. Positive instructions have been sent there, as well as in relation to the position of the enemy in these waters.

If by events occurring in America, or in the course of your cruise, you should find yourself in a position which does not permit you to carry out your instructions, and that you might not be able to think of any new operation, you will despatch the squadron of Admiral Gourdon with three or four of the fastest Spanish ships from Ferrol, to undertake a cruise in conformity with the accompanying instructions: Our intention is that you should raise the blockade of Rochefort, and that you should give the accompanying instructions to Captain Allemand, whose exit you will cover; and that this being done, you should take my fleet to Cadiz with the Ferrol ships; that you cover the entry into Cadiz of the squadron from Cartagena; that you occupy the Straits; that you ravage the Roads of Gibraltar, and that you should complete there with provisions.*

I do not know when the text of the instructions, according to this draft, reached Villeneuve. It is possible that the orders may have gone out by the *Didon* frigate, which out-sailed Mazon's squadron, and was with Villeneuve at Martinique before the 4th of June. Otherwise it does not appear that he could have received them before his arrival at Vigo. That he had them at some time seems clear, from an observation in his letter of explanation after bearing up for Cadiz.

I proceed now to complete the narrative.

On the 29th of May, being within a week's sail of Barbados, Nelson detached a frigate to warn Admiral Cochrane, supposed to be with 6 sail of the line at Barbados, of his approach. On the 3rd of June he heard for certain of Villeneuve's arrival at Martinique, and the next day he anchored at Carlisle Bay, Barbados. Here he found Cochrane, but with only 2 sail of the line, the remaining 4 having been detained at Jamaica by Admiral Dacres. There was not a doubt in the minds of the authorities but that the French had gone south to attack Tobago and Trinidad. And when the general in command offered to embark himself, with 2,000 troops, to frustrate the French design, Nelson, though with much hesitation, accepted the offer.

The squadron, now of 12 sail of the line, sailed from Barbados for Trinidad on the 5th of June, and on the 7th arrived at the Gulf of Paria, only to learn that the French were not there, and

* *Precis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi., p. 250.

that there were no tidings of them. Instantly the steps were retraced. On the 9th Nelson, off Grenada, learnt that the enemy had passed Dominique on the 6th, and was steering north.

Following north, the British admiral was at Antigua on the 12th. He disembarked the troops there, and passed a moment in debate as to what was to be done. First, he must not quit the West Indies until he was certain the French had left; secondly, this meant inaction, and waiting for intelligence which was generally wrong, and had already proved to be the ruin of his hopes; thirdly, were there not good grounds for supposing that Villeneuve had already turned homewards? A frigate from France had certainly communicated with Villeneuve on the 31st May, and from that moment all had been hurry. Nelson believed that the *Furet* had informed Villeneuve of his being on passage after him.* If Barbados was the point of attack, why had it not been made long ago? If Tobago or Trinidad had been the objects, these two might have been approached before this, and neither to reach them nor St. Lucia, St. Vincent, or Grenada, was it necessary to stand to the northward in the first instance. If any of the islands were in view, the game the French fleet was playing was incomprehensible.† What impression could they hope to make on Jamaica with only 4,000 or 5,000 men? But if they did mean Jamaica, what was to prevent their steering thither direct from Martinique? Some thought they might be going to Porto Rico to wait for reinforcements; but the season was past, and if 15 sail of the line were coming out to join them, there would be no need to hide themselves.

The admiral's opinion was as firm as a rock that some cause, orders, or inability to perform any service in these seas, had made them resolve to proceed direct to Europe, sending the Spanish ships to the Havannah.‡

But, fourthly, if they were not then on their way home, they certainly would be presently, if they believed that Nelson was still

* The *Didon* was the frigate spoken of. She met Villeneuve at Port Royal, Martinique. Villeneuve seems to have first learnt the arrival of Nelson from prisoners taken out of the sugar ships captured on the 8th of June near Antigua.

† Troude leaves it partly incomprehensible, as he makes Villeneuve take on board 700 troops at Martinique, and 600 at Guadaloupe, and still proceed north to Antigua, with the intention of attacking Barbados. Vol. iii., p. 346.

‡ I have given Nelson's reasoning almost verbatim. It all seems conclusive enough, except the answer to the Porto Rico probability. There must, I think, have been some decisive matter in the news received at 8 P.M. on the 12th of June, and which he gave to Captain Bettesworth to take to the Admiralty.

in the West Indies; and it might be a month before his departure would be known.

Good or bad, Nelson's reasoning generally concluded in favour of action. He sent Bettesworth in the *Curieux* to the Admiralty, to inform them of what he believed, and what his intentions were.* He quitted Antigua finally on the 13th of June, taking one of Cochrane's ships with him, and thus bringing his force up to 11 sail of the line. He made straight for Cape St. Vincent, and was in sight of it on the 17th of July.

Villeneuve, meanwhile, as we know, had arrived at Martinique on the 13th of May, 21 days before Nelson arrived at Barbados. He lay there till the very day of Nelson arrived at Barbados, when having embarked a number of troops, he put to sea with the combined fleet.

It is not easy to say exactly what he intended to do, or why he had spent so long a time inactive—except for the capture of the Diamond Rock by a detachment—in the harbour of Fort Royal. The English accounts are silent as to his intentions. The French account, which I generally follow, says distinctly that an attack on Barbados was intended, in consequence of the certainty that neither Ganteaume nor Missiessy could join him at Martinique. But why should he then have stood away to the northward? However this may be, he did actually stand away east of Monserat and west of Antigua. On the 8th of June he captured a valuable fleet of sugar-laden ships off Antigua, and from them he learnt that 14 sail of the line had arrived at Barbados. This arrival, in the French Admiral's opinion, made it impossible to think of an attack either on Barbados or on any other British possessions in the West Indies. To return to Martinique, in order to wait the specified time for the arrival of the squadrons from Europe, seemed likely to

* Brenton, in his *Life of St. Vincent*, has an anecdote of Nelson, the point of which rests on the assumed fact that Bettesworth disobeyed his orders in going to England. Nelson's memo. of June 12th, 8 P.M., is conclusive against the fact and the story.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE III.

1.—Villeneuve leaving Martinique, June 4.
2.—Nelson arriving at Barbados, same date.
3.—Villeneuve, June 7.
4.—Nelson, same date.
5.—Villeneuve, June 8.
6.—Nelson, same date.
7.—Villeneuve, June 9.
8.—Nelson, same date.
9.—Villeneuve steering for Western Islands, June 10.
10.—Nelson, same date.
11.—Nelson sailing for Cape St. Vincent, June 13.

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produce no other result than to increase the number of sick on board, which was already considerable.*

His resolution was taken immediately. He put the whole of the West Indian troops into four frigates, with orders to land them at Guadaloupe. He sent two more frigates to convoy the prize sugar ships to the nearest port, and directed the whole six to rejoin him at a rendezvous 60 miles N.E. of Corvo, in the Azores. He then made sail for that rendezvous himself.

The condition of things in Europe was now this: Ganteaume, with his 21 sail of the line and his troops, had been trying all these months to get away, but being too closely watched by Cornwallis with 18 or 20 sail had been unable to do so, and was still in the Roads of Brest.

Missiessy, with his squadron, it will be remembered, had returned from the West Indies, and had got safe into Rochefort on the 20th of May. There he found orders waiting him which might have been put in force had he returned earlier. They were to the effect that if he could get away by the 15th of May, he was to return to the West Indies and join Villeneuve. If, however, the latter had left, he was to follow him direct to Ferrol, and to put into port there if Villeneuve was not met. If Ferrol was blockaded, this would presuppose the non-arrival of Villeneuve, and Missiessy was to cruise in the offing for a sufficient time to allow for Villeneuve's arrival, and to return to Rochefort if he failed to appear.†

The late arrival of Missiessy, and the extensive repairs which his ships required, prevented his being soon ready for sea, and fresh instructions were issued to him.

He was now directed to make a demonstration on the coast of Ireland, in order to distract the attention of the British, and to cause them to detach forces to that coast. He was, however, to keep away from the coast until the 4th to the 9th of July, burning or sinking every neutral or enemy's ship which might otherwise give note of his whereabouts. Between those dates he was to appear off the Shannon and Cape Clear, then to disappear again at sea, and finally to rendezvous 120 miles west of Ferrol from the 29th of July to the 3rd of August pending the arrival of Vice-Admiral Villeneuve, under whose orders he was then to place himself. If this meeting did not take place before the 13th of August, Missiessy was to proceed to Vigo. If, however, Ferrol was found

* Villeneuve thought that with Cochrane's ships there would be 16 against him; the number, as we have seen, was exaggerated.—Troude, vol. iii., p. 346.

† Troude, vol. iii., p. 334.

to be not blockaded when Missiessy appeared off it, he was to take the division formed there under his orders, and remain at a convenient rendezvous near at hand.*

On the 26th of June, the health of Missiessy had so broken down as to make it necessary that he should resign his command to Commodore Allemand.

This officer, with his 5 sail of the line, was now blockaded at Rochefort by Rear-Admiral Stirling with an equal force.

In Ferrol were still the Franco-Spanish squadron of 10 sail of the line, but now increased to 14 sail, and these ships were watched by Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, with only 10 sail of the line.

It is easy to see how portentous to the issue of the war Villeneuve's return across the Atlantic in June 1805 actually was. Before the 11th of July, the only thing known to Cornwallis and his outlying squadrons was that Villeneuve had actually arrived at Martinique about two months before, and that Nelson was on his way after him; but what was about to happen, and when Villeneuve would appear in European waters, was entirely hidden from knowledge. Only it was, on the face of things, probable that Nelson's arrival in the West Indies would drive Villeneuve home again.

But if Villeneuve reached Ferrol at the head of 18 or 20 sail of the line, what could Calder do, except retire? Such retirement would release the Ferrol ships, and Villeneuve's fleet would be augmented to 34 sail of the line. There was then nothing to prevent him from appearing off Rochefort, driving Stirling away, and augmenting his fleet to 39 sail of the line by the addition of Allemand's squadron.

Cornwallis, off Brest, would only have some 28 sail of the line under his command when Calder and Stirling had fallen back and joined him. Would it be possible for him to face Villeneuve's 39 sail of the line, when Ganteaume was pressing out of Brest with 21 sail of the line behind him? It would have been a desperate venture, but, short of power to beat both fleets in succession, there was nothing to prevent Villeneuve's sailing leisurely up the Channel from Ushant at the head of his 60 sail of the line, and covering the passage of Napoleon's vast array to the shores of Kent and Sussex.

Such speed had been made by Bettesworth in the *Curieux*, that Cornwallis got news of Villeneuve's being on his way home, and

* Troude, vol. iii., p. 335.

Admiralty orders thereupon, on the 11th of July, five days before Nelson reached Cape St. Vincent.

In obedience to the order, he sent to Admiral Stirling to raise the blockade of Rochefort, and to join Calder off Ferrol.

Calder, with his force thus augmented to 15 sail of the line, was ordered to take his post 100 miles west of Ferrol, and to wait for Villeneuve, who was supposed to have not more than 16 sail with him, whereas, as he have seen, he was at the head of 20 sail of the line. Calder was on this station when Nelson arrived at Cape St. Vincent.

It will be well here to repeat the former process of assembling together the contemporary events, in order to get a clearer view of what was actually taking place.

June 4th, 1805.—Villeneuve sails from Fort Royal, Martinique, with 20 sail of the line. Nelson arrives at Carlisle Bay, Barbados, and is joined by 2 sail of the line, making 12 in all.

June 5th.—Villeneuve on his way to Antigua. Nelson sails for Trinidad.

June 7th.—Villeneuve to the eastward of Antigua. Nelson arrives at Paria Bay, Trinidad; finds he has been misled, and turns his head north.

June 8th.—Villeneuve passing round the north part of Antigua, hears of the Sugar Convoy to the N.N.E.; chases and captures 15 sugar ships valued at 500,000 francs; hears also of Nelson's arrival at Barbados, and supposes him to have 16 sail under his command. Nelson is approaching Grenada.

June 9th.—Villeneuve, north of Antigua, puts the West Indian troops into six frigates to be landed at Guadaloupe. Nelson, off Grenada, learns that Villeneuve was seen to pass Dominica on the 6th.

June 10th.—Villeneuve sails for the rendezvous off the Western Islands. Nelson is steering north for Antigua.

June 12th.—Villeneuve is at sea on his way home. Nelson, at Antigua, disembarks his troops; receives important intelligence at 8 P.M.; despatches Bettesworth in the *Curieux* to the Admiralty, and sails, on 13th, with 11 line-of-battle ships for Cape St. Vincent.

June 30th.—Villeneuve, at the rendezvous off Corvo, is joined by his frigates. Nelson is at sea on his way home.

July 3rd.—Villeneuve re-captures a Spanish galleon valued at 15,000,000 francs, which had been taken by the British privateer *Mars*. Nelson still at sea.

July 17th.—Villeneuve within five days' sail of Calder's rendezvous. Nelson arrives off Cape St. Vincent.

Nelson had now been chasing and continually missing Villeneuve for three months and thirteen days. His last run after him had covered more than 7,000 miles of sea, at the rate of 93 miles a day. There was now the choice before him of going east to Cadiz, or north to Ferrol, and under the spell of ill-fortune which ever pursued him he chose the former route. Collingwood was watching Cadiz, but Nelson did not now meet with him; they only corresponded on the state of affairs, while Nelson put first into Gibraltar for stores and refitting, and then into Tetuan for water. He finally weighed from this latter place, with the intention of going north, on the 24th of July.

Collingwood had been writing to Nelson, putting to him the dangers of the position, and the probable plans of Napoleon. He penetrated parts of the Emperor's apparent design, but he considered Ireland the main point about to be struck at. Nelson now received a second letter, in which Collingwood said:—

> The flight to the West Indies was to take off the naval force, which is the great impediment to their undertaking. The Rochefort squadron's return confirmed me. I think they will now collect their forces at Ferrol—which Calder tells me are in motion—pick up those at Rochefort, who, I am told, are equally ready, and will make them about 30 sail; and then, without going near Ushant or the Channel fleet, proceed to Ireland, when the Brest fleet—21, I believe, of them—will sail either to another part of Ireland or up the Channel; a sort of force that has not been seen in those seas perhaps ever.

On the 25th of July, Nelson saw Collingwood, and talked matters over with him. He learnt then, also, that the Franco-Spanish fleet had actually been seen about half way between the West Indies and the Azores, steering for Europe on the previous 19th of June.

Nelson stood again to the northward. He was 400 miles west of Lisbon on the 3rd of August. He crossed the Bay of Biscay without intelligence, and without meeting anything worth notice, and then finally joined the squadron of Cornwallis off Ushant on the 15th.

Meanwhile, this is what had been happening elsewhere. Calder was, as we have seen, on his rendezvous 100 miles west of Ferrol, with 15 sail of the line, in hourly expectation of seeing an enemy's fleet only larger by one line-of-battle ship than his own. His health was bad. The constant anxiety of his situation was wearing him down. But he was able, zealous, and willing. He had been

captain of the fleet under Jervis on Valentine's Day, and was not a likely man to fail.

The morning of the 22nd of July was very thick, with a light breeze from W.N.W. Calder's ships were on the starboard tack, standing therefore, no doubt, under very easy sail to the south-westward. The *Defiance* was stationed as a look-out ship nine or ten miles to windward of the main squadron, and between eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, during a momentary lifting of the fog, this ship signalled an enemy's fleet to the south-west. This was Villeneuve's 20 sail; they were in three columns, steering straight for Ferrol, and nearly straight for the British fleet.

Calder thereupon formed in line of battle, and Villeneuve did the same; but the fog was too dense for either fleet to see what was done by the other, or even to count their numbers. As a fact, they were presently in the position of passing one another on opposite tacks, starboard side to starboard side, and as much as seven miles apart. It was not until 3 P.M. or thereabouts, that the *Sirius* frigate, having been sent to reconnoitre, reported by signal the exact number—20—of the enemy's sail of the line.

Calder thereupon made the signal to "engage the enemy," and immediately afterwards the signal to tack, the object being the natural one to close with the enemy on the same tack with him, but to leeward. It was still too foggy to see what was going on, but when the *Hero*, which was Calder's leading ship, got a little nearer, she found that the combined fleet itself had tacked, and was standing to the S.W. The *Hero* immediately tacked, and was followed by the rest of the British ships in succession. So the battle was joined very much in the old way. Both fleets were on the starboard tack, the British to leeward, engaging with their starboard guns, while the combined fleet engaged with their port guns. But what between the fog and the smoke, it was difficult to say what was happening, or almost what was being fired at.

In this somewhat confused state, the firing went on as steadily as was possible, till about 8 o'clock, when it was found that two Spanish ships, the *San Rafael* and the *Firme*, had struck to the British fleet.

It was growing dark at half-past 8, and the fleets were drawing rather apart. Calder made the night signal to discontinue the action, but the general state of things was such that the firing did not altogether cease till an hour later. It had lasted altogether about four hours and a half, and it had left the two Spanish prizes in the hands of the British, at a loss of 39 killed and 159 wounded,

while the combined fleet had suffered a loss of 476 in killed and wounded.

Calder's squadron now lay-to all night with their heads to the S.W., repairing damages, and the combined fleet remained in the same condition.

At daylight on the 23rd of July it was almost as foggy as ever; the two fleets were some 17 miles apart, and each was in more or less disorder. The British were hampered by the presence of the disabled prizes, and also by one of their own ships, the *Windsor Castle*, which was also disabled. Yet it was so thick that Calder could hardly tell what the situation of his fleet really was, and a movement to close up his ships was taken by Villeneuve to be a sign of weakness, who bore up with an intention, which he did not carry out, of reopening the engagement. Being to windward, Villeneuve always had the opportunity, had he wished it, of bringing on the action again. Calder could certainly make attempts in that way, but only at some disadvantage.

Villeneuve, however, was from his orders necessarily disinclined for more decisive action. His purposes would have been much better fulfilled had he never seen Calder at all, even if he had beaten him.

Calder, on his part, had to remember that there were 14 ships from Ferrol, and 5 from Rochefort, which might be close upon him. The combined fleet was still 18 sail strong, while his own, on account of the disabled *Windsor Castle*, was reduced to 14 sail. The odds were heavy, when 19 additional enemies might be in sight as soon as the fog lifted.

The two fleets passed out of each other's view on the 24th of July.* Villeneuve made for Vigo, and anchored there on the 26th.† Calder conveyed his prizes towards the Channel, then

* At 6 A.M. on the 23rd, according to nautical time.

† "In the first moment after the battle, Villeneuve was almost happy that he had met the English without experiencing a disaster; but having left the scene of action, and having had time for reflection, his discouragement and habitual melancholy deepened into a profound grief. . . . To complete his misfortune, the wind which for two days had been favourable had now become contrary again. To the sick, whose numbers had increased, the wounded had now to be added. There were not the necessary refreshments for them, and there was only water for five or six days. Thus situated, he again wanted to proceed to Cadiz, Lauriston again opposed this course; they split the difference and ran into Vigo."—Thiers' *History of the Consulate and the Empire* (Authorized Translation), vol. v., pp. 236–7.

Troude, vol. iii., p. 356, makes Villeneuve's decision to rest entirely on the wind, and his anxiety to land his sick and wounded. When the wind set in from the N.E. he steered for Cadiz; then after six hours, on a change to S.S.W., he made for Ferrol; then, on a change back to N.E., for Vigo.

James (*Naval History*, vol. iv., p. 16) dates the arrival at Vigo as given in the text, but Troude (vol. iii., p. 356) makes it the 28th.

steered back for Ferrol, and finding on arrival off the port on the 29th of July that Villeneuve had not put in there, he resumed the blockade of it, and awaited orders.

On the next day, the 30th of July, Villeneuve sailed from Vigo for Ferrol, but now with only 15 sail, having left three behind him at Vigo.* On the 1st of August a strong south-westerly gale sprang up, which drove Calder away to the north-east, and enabled Villeneuve to pass into Ferrol unobserved. And thus, in spite of his mishaps and difficulties, the French admiral again found himself at the head of a fleet (29 sail of the line) so numerically superior to anything he was likely to meet, that had the quality been equal to the quantity, what had passed would have been mere incidental circumstances, in no degree troubling or hindering the main action of the great plan which was now working towards the *dénoûment*.†

Calder had detached Stirling with 4 sail of the line to resume the blockade of Rochefort, and now, when the wind moderated, and he reappeared off Ferrol on the 9th of August, with only 9 sail of the line, and found 29 enemy's ships ready to leave port, there was no possible course open to him but to fall back and join Lord Cornwallis off Ushant, which he did on the 14th.

There was still one thing wanting to complete Villeneuve's arrangements before he proceeded to roll up the blockading fleet at Brest, to set Ganteaume free, and to sweep into the Channel in his company unopposed. When Stirling should get to Rochefort, he was sure to find it empty, for Allemand had put to sea

* The *Atlas*, French, and the *America* and *España*, Spanish. They had not suffered much in the action, but were said to be slow sailers, and likely to delay the fleet. They remained as hospital ships to accommodate the 1,200 sick and wounded which were discharged from the combined fleet. Villeneuve was only too glad of any excuse to be quit of the Spanish ships. "They have always," he wrote to Decrès, "brought us to the lowest depths of misfortune."—*Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 238.

† It was in this sense that Napoleon affected to write to Villeneuve at Ferrol, endeavouring to encourage him in the belief that all was as it should be (see the letter of August 13th at p. 242, vol. v., *Consulate and Empire*). Villeneuve, however, was not to be encouraged. "I am about to sail," he wrote to Decrès from Ferrol. . . . "No doubt it is thought that sailing hence with 29 ships, I am considered able to fight vessels of anything like the same number; I am not afraid to confess to you that I should be sorry to meet with 20. Our naval tactics are out of date; we only know how to range ourselves in line, and that is precisely what the enemy wishes for. I have neither time nor means to agree upon another system with the commanders of the vessels of the two nations. . . . I foresaw all this before I left Toulon; but all my delusions did not vanish until the day on which I saw the Spanish ships which are joined to mine . . . then I was obliged to despair of everything."—*Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 240.

directly after the blockade had been raised nearly a month before. Villeneuve was bound, if he could, to pick up Allemand before he went on, and he seems to have had some idea of doing it off Cape Ortegal.* However this may be, Villeneuve sailed on the 11th of August, and was on the 13th and 14th off Cape Ortegal. The Rochefort squadron was, in fact, then close to him, but not actually seeing him, made for Vigo, and anchored there on the 16th of August. Villeneuve's latest orders from Napoleon had urged him to proceed to Brest, and give battle to the British fleet off that port at all hazards, even at the loss of his own fleet, in order to enable Ganteaume to put to sea. That was all that was necessary, in the opinion of the Emperor, to allow the 150,000 men in the 2,000 vessels lying ready, from Etaples to Cape Grisnez, to cross the Channel.† I must allow the French Admiral to make his own statement in explanation, or justification, of the fact that on the 15th of August he bore up and steered for Cadiz.

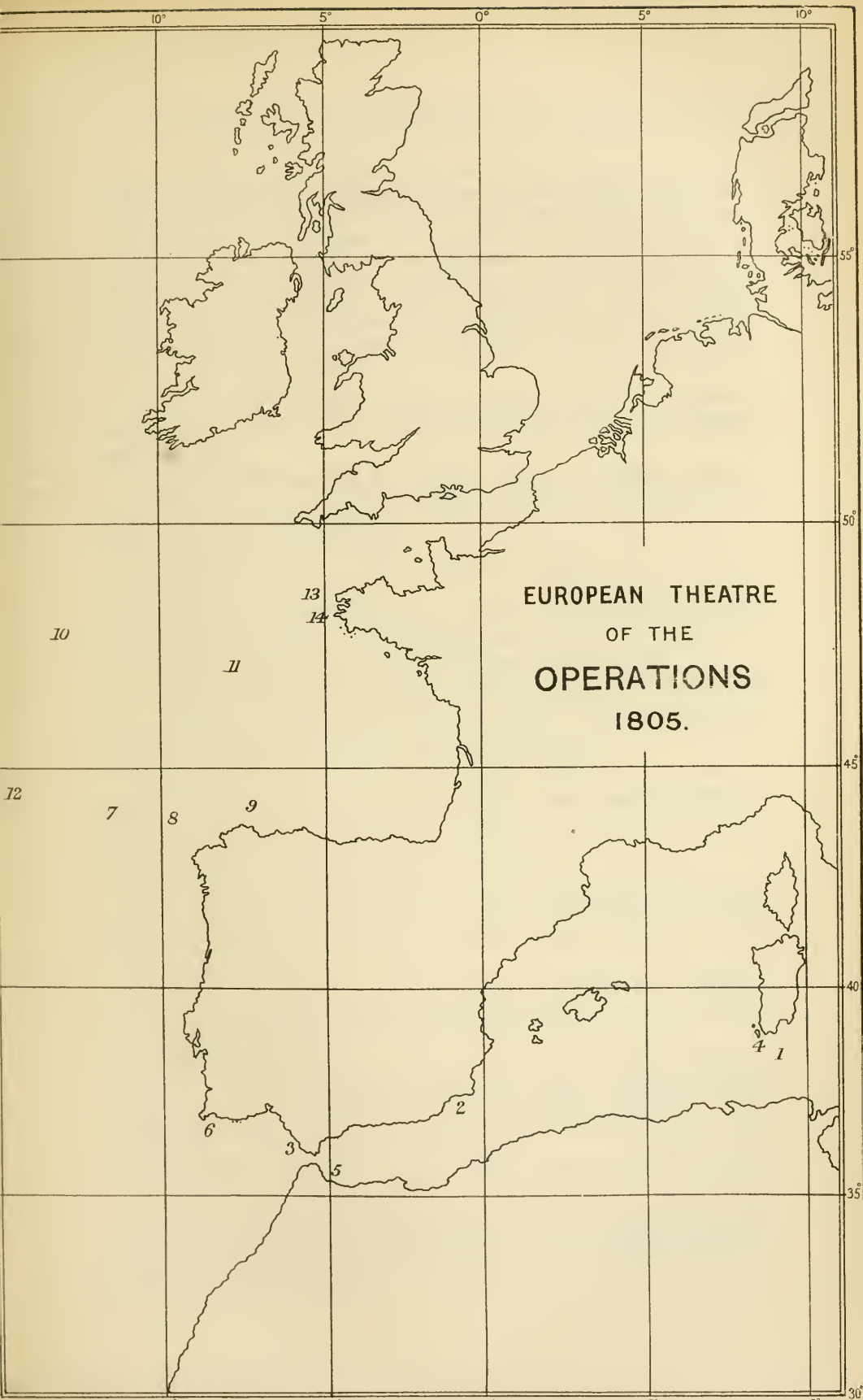
I was observed, on the day I quitted Ferrol, and the next morning also, by the frigates and by 2 sail of the line of the enemy, which I chased by the fastest ships in the fleet without being able to approach them. Having found the winds from the N.E. set in, and having stretched to the W.N.W. during the whole of the 14th and 15th without any appearance of change; having no confidence in the state of the armaments of my ships, or in their speed, or in the precision of their manœuvres; the reunion of the forces of the enemy, their knowledge of all my proceedings since my arrival on the coast of Spain, left me no hope of being able to carry out the great object for which the fleet was destined. In struggling longer against foul winds, I should experience irreparable damage and inevitable separations, the Spanish ship *San Francisco de Asis* having already lost her main topmast. Convinced that the state of affairs was essentially changed since the issue of His Majesty's orders, who, in directing the main part of his naval forces on the Colonies, had for his object to divide those of the enemy

* Allemand's various orders, as stated, do not correspond with his acts. According to Troude (vol. iii., pp. 335-6), he should have made Ferrol as soon as he was free to put to sea, and only to cruise if he was prevented from doing so. At Vigo, he found orders from Villeneuve to rendezvous at the Penmarks. James (vol. iv., p. 27) says Allemand did not find any instructions at Vigo.

† Troude, vol. iii., p. 357.

Explanation of Plate III.

1.—Nelson, April 6, 1805.
2.—Villeneuve, same date.
3.—Villeneuve, April 8.
4.—Nelson, April 16.
5.—Nelson, May 5.
6.—Nelson, May 12.
7.—Calder's action, June 22
Nelson again at 5.
8.—Villeneuve, August 12 (approx.).
9.—Allemand, same date (approx.).
10.—Nelson, same date.
11.—Calder, same date.
12.—Point where Villeneuve bore up, August 15th.
13.—Nelson, same date.
14—Cornwallis and Calder, same date.



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by drawing his attention to his distant possessions, in order to surprise him, and to strike at his heart by their sudden return to Europe and their combined reunion; that this plan not having succeeded, being, in fact, upset by the time which had elapsed, and by the calculations to which the speed of the squadron had given occasion, the enemy was placed in a position to defend it; and that the junction of his forces, at this moment was greater than under any preceding circumstances, and was such that they might prove superior to the united fleets of Toulon; seeing, therefore, no chance of success in this state of affairs, and, conformably to my instructions, I determined, on the third day after my departure, on the evening of the 15th, being then 80 leagues W.N.W. of Cape Finisterre, to bear up for Cadiz.*

Let me now, finally, set out the contemporary events side by side, that the flow of the story up to the *dénoûment* may be the better comprehended.

July 22*nd*.—Villeneuve's and Calder's fleets in action west of Ferrol; Allemand's squadron within a day's sail of the spot. Nelson anchors in Mazarri Bay.

July 24*th*.—Villeneuve and Calder lose sight of each other. Nelson sails from Mazarri Bay.

July 26*th*.—Villeneuve anchors at Vigo. Calder convoying his prizes to the northward. Allemand at sea looking for Villeneuve. Nelson off the coast of Portugal, steering to the northward.

July 29*th*.—Villeneuve at Vigo; Allemand at sea, looking for him. Calder off Ferrol, with 13 sail; Nelson below the latitude of Lisbon, with 11 sail, steering to the northward.

August 1*st*.—Calder driven from Ferrol to the N.E. by a gale of wind. Villeneuve sails from Vigo with 15 sail, and anchors at Corunna; is now at the head of 29 sail; Allemand still at sea looking for him. Nelson still south of Lisbon.

August 9*th*.—Villeneuve still at Corunna; Allemand still at sea. Calder arriving off Ferrol with 9 sail, finds Villeneuve there, and falls back to join Cornwallis off Brest; Nelson within six days of Ushant.

August 11*th*.—Villeneuve quits Corunna with 29 sail; Allemand in the neighbourhood of Cape Ortegal with 5 sail. Nelson within four days of Ushant.

August 13*th*.—Villeneuve off Cape Ortegal, standing W.N.W., with 29 sail; Allemand close to, but not in sight. Nelson, 11 sail, within two days of Ushant; Calder, 9 sail, within one day's sail of Ushant.

August 15*th*.—Villeneuve, being 240 miles W.N.W. of Cape Finis-

* Troude, vol. iii., p. 360. He says (vol. iii., p. 551) that before leaving the West Indies, Villeneuve received orders which would have justified his going to Cadiz. I am disposed to think, however, that he was relying on the latter part of Napoleon's draft of May 8th, already quoted.

terre, with a N.E. wind, bears up for Cadiz; Allemand within one day's sail of Vigo. Nelson joins Cornwallis off Brest.

August 16*th*.—Villeneuve on his way south; Allemand anchors at Vigo. Nelson on his way home with only *Victory* and *Superb*.

While these transactions were in progress at sea, Napoleon had been apparently fully persuaded of the ultimate success of his plans, and fully determined to push his army across, so soon as the sails of the combined fleets should appear. He arrived at Boulogne on the 3rd of August, reviewed a line of infantry nine miles long, and said: "The English know not what awaits them. If we have the power of crossing but for twelve hours, England will be no more."* He heard of Calder's action about the 13th of August, and on that day wrote to Villeneuve the commendatory letter already noticed, in which he said :—

The English are not so numerous as you seem to imagine. They are everywhere in a state of uncertainty and alarm. Should you make your appearance for three days—nay, even for 24 hours—your mission would be fulfilled. Make the moment of your departure known to Admiral Ganteaume by an extraordinary courier. Never for a grander object did a squadron run such risks. . . For this great object of forwarding the descent upon that power which for six centuries has oppressed France, we may all die without regretting the sacrifice of life. . . . England has in the Downs only 4 ships of the line, which we daily harass with our praams and our flotillas.†

On the 14th he wrote to Lauriston, who still remained on board Villeneuve's flagship, saying :—

We are ready everywhere. Your presence in the Channel for 24 hours will suffice.‡

On the 22nd of August the courier who had been despatched with the news of Villeneuve's having quitted Ferrol, arrived at Boulogne. The Emperor and the Minister of Marine were quartered some distance apart, and each received separate letters from Villeneuve's flag-ship. The Emperor heard from Lauriston, expressing full confidence that the fleet was on its way to Brest. The Minister Decrès, received a letter from Villeneuve, which gave him strong reason to believe that Villeneuve would never appear at Brest.

Before he saw Decrès, the Emperor wrote to Ganteaume and to Villeneuve, supposing both would be at Brest when his letters reached. To Ganteaume he said, "Set out, and come hither." To Villeneuve he said, "I hope that you are at Brest. Set out; lose not a moment. Bring my united squadrons into the Channel,

* *Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 222, *et seq.*
† *Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 243.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

and England is ours! We are all ready; everything is embarked. Be here but for 24 hours and all is ended."*

But presently Decrès waited on him with the expression not only of his doubts about Villeneuve, and his conviction that he would next appear at Cadiz, but of his own view that the whole plan was a mistake—"horribly dangerous." Napoleon, apparently furious, pondered for twenty-four hours, and then accepting as certainty the Minister's belief, sent for his Secretary, Daru, and enacted with him that scene told with such dramatic effect by Thiers and Alison, from a paper left by Daru himself; but over which Alison makes such a strange mistake. Daru being sent for, found the Emperor in his cabinet in a transport of rage, rushing up and down in a fury, and breaking out into exclamations: "What a navy! What sacrifices for nothing! What an admiral! All hope is gone! That Villeneuve, instead of entering the Channel, has taken refuge in Cadiz. He will be blockaded there! Daru, sit down and write——." What was written there and then were the preliminary directions for the Campaign of Austerlitz, and the final abandonment of the design of invading England.†

In reviewing the nature and prospects of this last and apparently gigantic and complex effort of France, we are met by a very strong sensation of difficulty resting on the doubt—which I may own to operate with much force on my mind—whether Napoleon ever really meant to try the hazard of invasion. M. Thiers is quite satisfied that he did fully mean it, and he certainly seemed to do so. But with a mind such as Napoleon's, so firmly persuaded of the value of untruth, we never know where we are. Anyone reading the "Pièces Justificatives" given by Dumas in the eleventh volume of his *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, where are set out in a continued series Napoleon's orders and observations on the movements and combinations of the Franco-Spanish fleets up to the 26th of June, cannot fail to be struck with the very large space which is given to the West Indian arrangements, and the small space which the notion of command in the Channel occupies.

And then the changes in the plans and their want of completeness require some explanation, if the Emperor was really earnest in that which, ostensibly, he was full of. It was only, apparently,

* *Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 245.

† Alison's mistake is that he makes this scene occur on the 11th instead of the 23rd of August; and that he substitutes Ferrol for Cadiz. He was probably misled by his knowledge that Villeneuve was forbidden to enter Ferrol, not understanding that this only meant the *harbour* of Ferrol, not the roadstead, and that the objection rested solely on the difficulty of getting out again except with a north-east wind.

when the impossibility of the Brest fleet's putting to sea became manifest that the ultimate plan of Villeneuve's combining with the forces at Ferrol and Rochefort, and then passing up Channel to release Ganteaume at Brest was finally adopted.

And then we have two statements by Napoleon himself: first, that half the flotilla was sham, and then, that the whole of it was sham. In his note on the flotilla, dictated after his return from Boulogne, he says the whole provision of armed vessels, praams, gun-boats, flat boats, and *peniches*, were perfectly useless; they were a mere blind, to deceive the English into the belief that he meant to attempt to cross without the cover of a fleet—a thing which he very well knew could not be done.*

Prince Metternich, in his autobiography, says: "By far the greater part of the political prophets, the camp at Boulogne was regarded as a preparation for a landing in England. Some better instructed observers saw in this camp a French army held in readiness to cross the Rhine, and that was my opinion. In one of my longer conversations with Napoleon in the journey to Cambray, whither I accompanied the Emperor in 1810, the conversation turned upon the great military preparations which he had made in the years 1803–5 in Boulogne. I frankly confessed to him that even at the time I could not regard these offensive measures as directed against England. 'You are very right,' said the Emperor, smiling. 'Never would I have been such a fool as to make a descent upon England, unless, indeed, a revolution had taken place within the country. The army assembled at Boulogne was always an army against Austria. I could not place it anywhere else without giving offence; and, being obliged to form it somewhere, I did so at Boulogne, where I could, whilst collecting it, also disquiet England. The very day of an insurrection in England, I should have sent over a detachment of my army to support the insurrection. I should not the less have fallen on you, for my forces were echeloned for that purpose. Thus you saw, in 1805, how near Boulogne was to Vienna.'"†

There is another incidental argument in favour of Prince Metternich's view, which is the varied and vague way in which Napoleon spoke of the length of time during which he required command of the sea to get his forces over. In July 1804 he said: "Let us be masters of the Straits for six hours, and we shall be

* See *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xii., p. 316.

† *Memoirs of Prince Metternich*. Translated by Mrs. A. Napier. 1880.

masters of the world."* In draft instructions to Villeneuve, of May 8th, 1805, he says: "If your presence makes us masters of the sea for three days off Boulogne, we shall be able to make our expedition, composed of 160,000 men in 2,000 vessels."† In the second draft on the same day, the time is four days and the number of men 150,000.‡

But, on the other hand, these direct statements, and these loose expressions seem to be outweighed by the distinctly anxious attitude of mind which Napoleon displayed as the time drew near when the arrival of Villeneuve off Brest was to be expected.

But if we are to believe that Napoleon was as much in earnest in the matter of a descent on the shores of England as he was in the matter of a concentration upon Ulm, then we must, I think, say that, confused by the double issue of a command of the sea, which was, after all, to be but an evasion of the enemy, Napoleon lost himself. The plans were too complex, too varied, and too indeterminate to have presented any real prospect of success. We are very generally accustomed to hear it said that Napoleon "decoyed" Nelson to the West Indies, and we seem generally to suppose that Collingwood exactly fathomed the Emperor's drift. But the West Indian Expeditions were no feints; nor do we gather that though, as a general principle, the idea was to draw the enemy's forces abroad, Napoleon distinctly contemplated that his admirals would be followed to the West Indies. Moreover, supposing it were otherwise, the idea of strategy would be somewhat lacking if we suppose that Villeneuve's main object in going to the West Indies was to draw Nelson after him. The fact proves it, for we see Nelson outsailing Villeneuve on the return voyage. If the main object had been to draw a British squadron away, the voyage to the West Indies should have been a pretended one, and Villeneuve, taking care that Nelson was duly informed of his supposed West Indian destination, should have turned back on the limited Ferrol blockading squadron and annihilated it, while forming his junction with the ships in the port. It was the same with Missiessy's squadron. If command of the Channel had been primarily aimed at, a rendezvous at sea with Villeneuve would have been properly appointed, and not the distant one at Surinam.

* Napoleon to Latouche-Tréville. *Précis des Evénemens Militaires*, vol. xi., p. 200.
† *Ibid.*, p. 249.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

On the whole, I think that in some way or other, failure might have been predicted for designs which were too great, too complex, and too full of risk. The mere embarkation of bodies of troops on board the ships was against success in the supposed ulterior design, for it meant sickness and short supplies in the ships. Nor can we, in forming a calm judgment, omit to notice that Napoleon seems to have been acting all along in the very teeth of his naval advice. We know that both Villeneuve and Decrès remonstrated with him, and the strong language of the Minister of Marine on the 22nd of August is not to be forgotten :

> And to speak the whole truth, a Minister of Marine, subjugated by your Majesty in naval affairs, serves you badly and becomes useless to your arms, if not actually injurious to them.*

Thus once more, but finally, we seem to draw the lesson from this last effort of France that it is unavailing to attempt to obtain the command of the sea by any other means than by fighting for it, and that that is so tremendous an undertaking that it will not bear consideration side by side with any other object.

* *Consulate and Empire*, vol. v., p. 247.

CHAPTER X.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea Succeed or Fail.

The gradations in completeness of command of the sea in relation to attacks upon territory.—Special state of West and East Indian waters on account of trade-winds and monsoons.—Powers of holding places supplied over a commanded sea.—Limits of these powers.—Two objects in attack: (1) Ravage and destruction; (2) occupation and conquest.—Time at disposal a measure of success in each over a doubtfully commanded sea.—An expedition must either be accompanied by overwhelming naval force, or else naval force should be absent.—Attacks without troops rare; confined to bombardment and forcing purposes.—System of citadels usual in fortification last century.—The philosophy of the system and its disadvantages to the power with superior naval force.—Superiority of naval defence.—Recapitulation.

In the last four chapters I have dealt with the history of the principal attempts of one naval power to wrest from the hands of another—but only for a time, and for a particular purpose—that command of the sea which the latter admittedly possessed. It has been seen that such attempts tend to become failures chiefly because attention, which ought to be wholly concentrated on a single class of operations of supreme moment, is dissipated and lost between two objects. So divided does the attention become, that whereas, ostensibly, the object is to get at least a local command of the sea for a limited time, and at all hazards, actually, the great naval preparations are thrown away, and the ulterior purpose of descent upon territory is seen to rest for success, after all, much more on the evasion of probably opposing forces, than of beating them by superior force upon the spot.

It has thus been seen that the dividing line between attempts to gain the command of the sea in order to facilitate a descent upon the land, and descents upon the land with an admitted want of command of the sea, is an exceedingly fine one. So fine, that it is the apparent magnitude of the naval preparations on the part of

the attacking force, in pursuance of the first object, which chiefly remains to distinguish them.

And then we further observe that the term "command of the sea," as applied to denote power to prevent the passage of an enemy intending to descend upon the land, is necessarily indefinite. Command may be absolutely complete, not only for that, but for all other purposes. It may be sufficiently complete to secure an expedition proceeding over sea for the attack of territory, from any sort of interruption either then, or at the point of attack; and yet it may not be sufficiently complete to make communications with the base from the point of attack absolutely secure. It may then be found by fine gradations, less and less complete, until command of the sea is wholly lost, and the enemy roves at will across the water routes which lead to the point of attack.

Of this absolute command of the sea we have but the single historical instance of our own position in the Crimean War. It was in part the result of the peculiar position of the enemy's naval ports, opening into seas which were themselves narrowed into easily-guarded outlets—the Bosphorus and Dardanelles; the Sound and the Belts. These narrow passages formed, as it were, outer gates to the prisons within which the enemy was confined, and were as a warning to him of the double risks he ran in any attempts to escape. But it is quite possible that but for the agency of steam propulsion in our hands, that absolute command of the sea which geographical conditions favoured us in holding, might have been incomplete. When ships were propelled by the wind, nature constantly stepped in to confound the designs of art, and to put into the hands of one side, advantages which to it were as unlooked for as to the other side they were prohibitive. But it may be fairly argued that had steam been as much at command of the Russian fleet as it was at command of that of the Allies, it is possible that even in the Baltic and Black Seas the control of the latter Powers might have been to some extent disputed.

From this absolute command of the sea, which left the Allies in their attack upon the Crimea entirely at ease with regard to their communications, we go forward a step to the Franco-German War, where the command of the sea was at least threatened, and where operations on the line of communications, if in a very insignificant degree, actually took place.* In the American Civil War, although the Confederate naval forces were never strong enough to interfere

* I allude to the captures made by the *Augusta* off the mouth of the Gironde during the height of the war.

from seaward with any of the Federal attacks on Confederate ports, they were occasionally in a position to operate on the Federal water communications with their bases. That they did not do so, arose in the usual way, from a consideration of the balance of risks and advantages. In the Chilo-Peruvian War we find that the inferior naval power, while not strong enough to dispute the command of the sea, did operate on the communications most effectually in certainly one case.* In the Austro-Italian War of 1866, the Italian command of the sea was so ill estimated, that the inferior Austrian fleet was able to defeat the attempt to capture the Island of Lissa by a victory over the superior Italian fleet.

Passing back from these modern illustrations, we ascend the stream of time to a set of conditions where each of the forces at war held a simultaneous command of the sea within the immediate sphere of the operations of its fleets, but not beyond it. Each side had forces on the open sea, intact and threatening. If attacks on the land were to be made by either side under such conditions, they were made by admittedly inferior naval forces, trusting entirely to evasion—to carrying out the work of surprise, and completing it so quickly as to preclude the probable arrival of superior relieving naval force; or else they were made under cover of a locally superior naval force—a force which defied the interference of the enemy at sea.

We shall see this phase of the command of the sea abundantly illustrated in the history of naval war, and we shall compare, in numerous instances, the two methods of treating it in relation to attacks upon territory.

Passing through this period or phase of the strategical position of the sea, considered as territory over which military forces march for the purposes of conquest at particular localities, we come to that very early phase which I have described in my first chapter, where neither side has, or attempts to have, any command of the sea; where the water may be considered a desert—indifferent territory not subject to offensive and defensive operations—but a mere marching ground or medium for the transmission of military force from any one point to any other.

I have endeavoured to show, in my first chapter, that the passage from this earliest phase of indifferent sea, to the second phase of sea of which the command may be disputed at any time

* I alludo to the capture of the Chilian transport *Rimac*, having on board 300 cavalry with their horses, by the Peruvian *Huascar* and *Union*.—Markham's *The War between Peru and Chili*, 1879–1882., p. 117.

and in any locality, has depended mainly on the growing improvement in naval architecture, and I may usefully enlarge for a brief space here on the point, as we must understand that in this case what has been, is, and will be. The possibility of the superior naval force controlling the open sea, either for facilitating its own marches across it for descents upon the land, or for preventing such descents by the inferior naval force, has assuredly grown and developed into probability and certainty by every improvement in the capacity of ships to proceed over the sea, and to maintain any given position on it. This has been so when the improvement has been equal on both sides. No argument on the other side is of value until this unquestionable fact has been explained away.

When naval war under sail began to develop itself, the superior naval power was precluded absolutely from keeping his forces in continual juxtaposition with those of the inferior naval power. The condition of the war-ships, and the weather in European waters, was such that all warlike operations had to be suspended for the winter months.

In the war which followed the accession of William III., which, with the war of the Succession, is a very useful subject of study in such inquiries as the present, there was a distinct objection to sending the first and second rates to sea as early as the 7th of May; and an equally strong objection to keeping them at sea after the 1st of August. Smaller ships might sail earlier, and return later, but even for these at first the mid-winter months were too dangerous to be faced. It followed that as spring came on, it was always a chance which fleet got to sea earliest. The mere fact that an English fleet, for instance, might (and often did) proceed off an enemy's port to find it empty and his fleet at sea, must have put the idea of undisputed command of the sea very far in the background in this country.*

No doubt there was fear on behalf of the larger ships, heavily charged with guns on weak decks supported by weak scantling as they were, lest they might be over-strained in a winter's gale. But this was not the danger which pressed upon contemporary authorities. The first and second rates, and perhaps the third rates—the strength of any fleet—were perfectly helpless under sail in heavy weather. It was not safe to have them at sea in any position where they had not room to drive for forty-eight hours. And time was converted into space by supposing one of the ships

* See *Entick*, p. 555.

in the middle of the English Channel in a northerly or southerly gale. It was known that in the northerly gale the southern shore would become, by reason of the ship's driving, a lee shore in six hours; or that in the southerly gale the north shore would become a lee shore in the same time.*

This throws a flood of light on the position. If ships could not be trusted even as near the shore as a mid-channel station would put them, they could not be trusted near an enemy's port, except under special and exceptional circumstances. And this is just what we observe. Most of the danger to our command of the sea was to be found at Brest, yet when the danger was to be faced in these earlier wars, the station of the facing fleet was never nearer than thirty miles from Ushant, unless there existed the intention of attacking the French ships in their own ports. Then indeed the English fleet went into Camaret and Berteaume Bays and anchored.

Under such conditions, the seas from the mouth of the English Channel to a line drawn from Cape Clear to Cape Finisterre were long in an indifferent state,† but yet the geographical conditions were such that territorial attacks on either side, coming over sea, were rare.

Long after the European waters, as a consequence of the improvements in ships, had passed the stage of indifference into that of disputed command, the waters on the other side of the Atlantic, in the West Indies and on the coasts of America, were often indifferent. And where this was so, we find a system of warfare carried on between the hostile territories very closely resembling the "cross-raiding" which I have shown in my first chapter to be characteristic of our home waters before the establishment of systematic naval war, and before therefore any rules for its effective conduct could have been conceived.

The causes of this condition in Western waters were twofold. Naval force was not indigenous to those seas; it was necessary to import it. The supply of it was consequently intermittent, so that often there was on neither side any naval force competent to take even a limited command of the sea. Another cause was the

* There is nothing more calculated to show the difference in the power of ships to keep the sea at early and late epochs, than to compare the blockade of Brest in 1805 with what was done off the port at earlier dates, remembering that the existing *Victory* took part in the later operations.

† I have to give to this term the technical meaning denoting a sea over which neither side attempts to hold command, and, therefore, which neither side threatens.

steady character of the wind in the West Indies. The duration of the passages from point to point were not, as in European waters, sometimes half and sometimes double the average length in time. The individual passage was, on the contrary, always close to the average, and therefore if a descent from one island upon another was designed, and the whereabouts of the possibly opposing naval force was known, something like accurate calculation could be made as to the time at disposal before the admittedly superior fleet could possibly put in an appearance to stop or destroy the expedition. If the complete intention of the descent could be fulfilled within this time, the waters over which it had to pass were certainly indifferent, and there was no such chance as evasion to be taken into account. If, on the contrary, there were a possibility, or a probability, that the opposing fleet might be in a position to oppose before there was reasonable hope of completing the objects of the expedition, then, if it sailed, it did not voyage over indifferent water, but within the area of disputed command of the sea, and it must depend upon evasion for success.

The approximately fixed direction from the eastward, and approximately fixed force of the wind, gave the easternmost positions in the West Indies always an advantage over the western. The distance from Antigua to Jamaica is, roughly, 850 miles. A well-found sailing ship of thirty or forty years ago would run from the first to the last place in seven or eight days, but the return voyage, made by beating against the wind south of Hispaniola and Porto Rico, would occupy three times that amount of time. Two hundred years ago both passages were longer, in consequence of the inferior character of the ships ; and both then and later, a squadron would be slower than a single ship over both passages, but proportionately over each passage.

This special condition of the West India Islands, brought about by the trade-winds, was so far recognized that, almost from the beginning, and up to the close of the Napoleonic wars, West Indian waters were divided into two naval commands, embracing the weathermost and the leewardmost waters. But the names given to the two stations, " The Jamaica Station " and " The Leeward Islands Station," were not calculated to bring out the significance of the fact. The Leeward Islands station was properly the Windward Islands station, but I suppose it took its name from the fact that its port of supply, English Harbour, Antigua, was accurately one of the Leeward Islands, that name embracing all the islands from Porto Rico to Dominica inclusive.

If the authorities of Martinique therefore had the necessary transport and troops for an attack, say on St. Lucia, but were unpossessed of naval force to secure command of the sea over which the expedition was to pass, and if they had knowledge that the only naval force capable of interfering with them was at Jamaica, they would know that for four or five weeks, certainly for four weeks, the sea which concerned them would be indifferent. Possessed of the necessary land force, and bent on attaining an object which it was reasonable to hope such force might fully attain in less than four weeks, there would exist no reason why success should not be assumed. At the same time as this was going on, there might be no naval force at Hispaniola to interfere with an expedition against it, fitted out at Jamaica; and we might therefore have at the same time, raiding going on by the French at Martinique against the English at St. Lucia; and raids going on by the English at Jamaica against the French at Hispaniola. That is to say that while there was naval force enough in the hands of the English in the West Indies to command the sea in any locality where it might put in an appearance, we should still see enacted in those waters "cross-raiding" practices only possible over an indifferent sea, and not found in use in European waters since a time before the days of Elizabeth.

But if we wish to come to the historical aspects of war across the water carried on in this way, we must be perfectly clear about the conditions which bring it about. In these cross-raids in European waters before Elizabeth's time, there was no conquest, properly so called, intended or attempted. One great country was divided from another great country by a strip of sea over which neither country had, or could have, the control. The raiding expeditions were small, and confined their operations almost to the water's edge of the enemy's shore. They were minor affairs not launched with the object of holding territory, and of a much lower strategic character than the operations of the smallest advanced guard on land with an army in its rear.

Time in these cases was nothing. All that had to be calculated was the transport of sufficient force to effect the object in view. If the force was rightly calculated, it effected its purpose on the land, and embarked again. If it was wrongly calculated, the enemy on land met it on or after its landing and beat it off again.

In the absence of naval force in the West Indies we had all the old conditions on a smaller scale: the islands at war, the one

with the other, because the mother countries were at war, were separated by small strips of indifferent water. Time was not of importance. If the force sent on the expedition was sufficient and properly handled, it obviously effected its purpose. If it was not sufficient or was improperly handled, it was beaten back on shore by the land forces of the invaded island.

But there was this difference between the case of European and West Indian waters when no properly called naval force was present. Expeditions could pass from one island to another with the intention of conquest, and they might succeed. The military forces were generally small, the territory invaded was generally small, and in proportion to its size was usually more easily conquered. When the waters therefore were really indifferent, the invasion, pure and simple, of one island by another, was usually a possibility, and was, as we shall see, not infrequent.

But just as the expeditions were small, so was any naval force large in disproportion to its actual size. Expeditions which might naturally have succeeded when pushed over really indifferent waters, were postponed, abandoned, or defeated, even on the mere show of very small opposing naval force. Not infrequently the simple report of the vicinity of opposing naval force would cause the abandonment of an enterprise; and we shall hear of hurried re-embarkations of expeditions already landed and progressing, on advice—true or false—of approaching naval force.

When opposing naval force was known to be in certain localities, the question of time became always important. In the supposititious case spoken of, of a projected attack by forces from the island of Martinique on the island of St. Lucia while there was ample opposing force at Jamaica, the expedition could only be undertaken if its completion might be reasonably calculated on well within the four weeks. Of course, if it were a mere harrying raid it would appear on a diminished scale, and would attempt nothing involving time, for time would bring the presumed superior land forces of St. Lucia up to defeat the object of the raid. But if the conquest of the island were the object, it must not only be completed before the four weeks had expired, but the conquered island must be settled within that time and prepared to resist all attempts to retake it. In this respect there is a difference between absolutely and relatively indifferent waters.

Again, in the West Indies, it could never be said that the waters were at any point absolutely indifferent, for an importation of naval force on the one side or the other from Europe might at

any unexpected moment occur. Generally speaking, the student of naval history may be reasonably struck by the rarity of the unexpected appearance of naval force. The unlooked-for apparition of single hostile ships, or even of small squadrons, to confound the designs of commanders looking for success to the permanence of an indifferent sea, may here and there be noticed, but this was seldom the case with squadrons of any force, and rare indeed, in the case of powerful fleets. But the mere fact that naval forces from Europe might present themselves at the most inopportune moment, was always a check upon expeditions crossing the water without the cover of a purely naval force.

There was a condition operating in the West Indies in a manner such as to closely resemble the effect of the winter season. The so-called "hurricane months," the months of August and September, were so dreaded, that the war-ships on both sides were accustomed to pass into Northern waters in July, and not to return till October. There was, therefore, a time corresponding to the European spring, when the early advent to the spot of even an inferior naval force might give a temporary command of the sea capable of being taken advantage of by the enterprising possessor of it. Just as in European waters the fleet which first "put to sea" after the enforced rest in port of the winter months, was always understood to have gained an advantage.

On the coasts of North America the conditions were not unlike those of the West Indian Islands, if we except the regularity of the winds. For centuries there were posts and settlements of English and French within easy, or comparativly easy, reach of one another by sea. And though these settlements were on the Continent, or on very large islands, they were often limited in area and in their population. Absolute conquest of one settlement by an expedition coming over sea from another, was not always out of the question by a comparatively small force, and capable of being effected, therefore, in a comparatively short time. Hence, for these particular purposes, there were sometimes found indifferent waters, especially in earlier days.

On the west coast of Africa, where stations, ports, or trading posts, were sometimes in the hands of opposing nations, the same conditions prevailed as those on the American coast, of an indifferent sea, and forces transported over it to the attack.

In the East Indies, the monsoons played the same part as the trade-winds in the West Indies, and put into the hands of the force which was to windward certainties of calculation which it could

use to its profit. We shall have at least one memorable and remarkable instance of the successful use of this advantage. But in the East Indies, settlement hardly made war over sea against settlement, for the reason that the settlers were few, though the populations were large. Naval force, and often a considerable amount of naval force, was necessary to conduct expeditions which could not be small. And hence, in the East Indies, when the state of affairs was such as to prompt the opposing powers to attack one another's territories by way of expeditions over sea, the state of the sea was not often indifferent. It was more commonly a condition of disputed command, or of command nearly complete.

We see, therefore, these three states of the sea considered as a strategic surface or medium for transport: the state of *Indifference*, of *Disputed Command*, and of *Assured Command*. And evidently there must be a continual passing from one state into a higher, and back again.

It must always be remembered that these terms apply only to possible or contemplated descents upon the land. They have nothing to do with the freedom or otherwise of sea-borne commerce, for this is, *prima facie*, defenceless, and therefore open to the attacks of that which is not properly naval force at all, being of too insignificant a character to be so classed. The attacks on commerce in fact have, historically, had little or no connection with the condition of the sea in the matter of command, unless that has been, as it was in the Crimean war, absolute. All through every stage of our naval wars since those of the Commonwealth, the capture of merchant ships has been kept on both sides as a sort of debtor and creditor account. I believe I am right in saying that only in the Crimean war was this not so. The condition was exceedingly marked in the American Civil War, and even in the Franco-German war there was just a retaliation by the German navy on French commerce for the grievous injuries suffered by the German commerce. In these wars, all stages of the sea were found; and sometimes the proportionate success was greatest against the Power which had an assured command of the sea so far as any attacks on territory over sea were concerned.

And if we take these three states of the sea into our contemplation as conditions under which expeditions across it succeed or fail, we may note that over a commanded sea no such expedition can be put in force at all by the inferior naval Power, except by evasion, else must we admit a sea which is of disputed command,

or one which is indifferent. On the other side, the Power in command of the sea ought never to fail in any attack it undertakes, so long as it does not cut itself off from its sea communications.

Transport by land and supply by land have never been able to compete on anything like equal terms with similar operations by sea. It was so when naval war began; it has been proved so down to our own day in the operations of war.* Even though railway

* The words of Sir Walter Raleigh are worth quoting on this head, not only for their truth, but as an illustration of how the great seamen of a long past age were accustomed to draw their lessons from ages still more remote. Speaking of the ill-luck of the Roman consuls Servius and Sempronius at sea after their success by land against the Carthaginians, and of the endeavour to maintain themselves without using the sea, he says: "But this late resolution of forsaking the seas lasted not long; for it was impossible for them to succour those places which they held in Sicily without a navy, much less to maintain the war in Africa. For whereas the Romans were to send forces from Messina to Egesta, to Lilybæum, and to other parts in the extreme west parts of Sicily, making sometimes a march of above one hundred and forty English miles by land, which could not be performed with an army and the provisions that followed it, in less than fourteen days, the Carthaginians would pass it with their gallies in forty-eight hours.

"An old example we have of transporting armies by water between Canutus and Edmund Ironside. For Canutus, when he had entered the Thames with his navy and army and could not prevail against London, suddenly embarked and sailing to the west, landed in Dorsetshire, so drawing Edmund and his army thither. There finding ill entertainment, he again shipped his men and entered the Severn, making Edmund march after him to the succour of Worcestershire, by him greatly spoiled. But when he had Edmund there, he sailed back again to London; by means whereof he both wearied the King and spoiled where he pleased, ere succour could arrive. And this was not the least help which the Netherlands have had against the Spaniards in the defence of their liberty, that being masters of the sea, they could pass their army from place to place, unwearied and entire, with all the munition and artillery belonging unto it, in the tenth part of the time wherein their enemies have been able to do it. Of this an instance or two. The Count Maurice of Nassau, now living, one of the greatest captains and worthiest princes that either the present or preceding ages have brought forth, in the year 1590 carried his army by sea, with forty cannons, to Breda, making countenance either to besiege Bois-le-Duc or Gertrudenberg, which the enemy (in prevention) filled with soldiers and victuals. But as soon as the wind served, he suddenly set sail, and arriving in the mouth of the Meuse, turned up the Rhine and thence to Yssel, and sat down before Zutphen. So before the Spaniards could march overland round about Holland, above eighty miles, and over many great rivers, with their cannon and carriage, Zutphen was taken. Again, when the Spanish army had overcome this wearisome march and were now far from home, the Prince Maurice, making countenance to sail up the Rhine, changed his course in the night, and sailing down the stream, he was set down before Hulst, in Brabant, ere the Spaniards had knowledge what had become of him. So this town he took before the Spanish army could return. Lastly, the Spanish army was no sooner arrived in Brabant than the Prince Maurice, attended by his good fleet, having fortified Hulst, set sail again, and presented himself before Nimeguen in Guelders, a city of notable importance, and mastered it. . . .

"For there is no man so ignorant, that ships, without putting themselves out of breath, will easily outrun the soldiers that coast them. "Les armées ne volent point en poste"

trains pass at a nominally higher speed than steam ships, their limit of speed has long been reached, while no one can yet say what is the limit of the speed of the latter. The railway also must be constructed, and is limited in carrying area; the sea is always ready and as unlimited as the land is. If a landing, therefore, can be effected on any point from which communication with the ships is secure, the occupation of the point is only a question of sufficient force, and the holding of it against any land forces can be made a matter of certainty, as being only one of reinforcement and supply, both of which are free to come over sea, freer than either can be to come over land.

But though this doctrine is true in the abstract, it has obvious limitations. It pre-supposes that the base or bases from which supplies and reinforcements come are at approximately equal distances by land and by sea. Although it be true that their transport is very much quicker by sea than by land, yet the sea bases may be so much farther off in distance than the land bases as to equalise the time intervals, or even to turn the scale very much in favour of the land. The abstract truth, therefore is limited by the geographical conditions, and every historical case of this kind must be considered under the actual conditions which limit the principle.

We shall see instances of failure to capture ports or places when the attack has been made over a practically commanded sea. These we can at once set down to insufficient force or insufficient perseverance in employing the force. We shall also find instances of failure to hold places captured, or otherwise obtained, and then left dependent on the sea for reinforcement and supply. There we shall note that the cause of the failure has really been the length in time of the sea-voyage between the bases of reinforcement and supply and the port or place to be held. The result has been that the supply and reinforcement of the investing forces by land has been far in advance of the supply and reinforcement of the invested forces by sea.

Such cases range themselves side by side with those where the communications of the landed forces with the sea have been cut, either by circumstances of weather or too great an advance into

(armies neither fly, nor run post), saith a marshal of France. And I know it to be true that a fleet of ships may be seen at sunset and after it at the Lizard, yet by next morning they may recover Portland; whereas an army of foot shall not be able to march it in six days.—*The History of the World*, by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight. Edinburgh, 1820. Vol. v., pp. 53–59.

the country; but they do not properly come into the class of those cases where these communications have been cut by the enemy. We then admit a sea either of doubtful command or of one commanded by the Power which holds the land on which the descent has been made, and the causes of the failure are due to either fact.

If the command of the sea is disputed, expeditions across it from the base or bases to the point to be attacked must, to be successful, take means to get a local command of the sea, or else risk evasion, and if it is intended to hold the place attacked, it must be made self-supporting, as there can be no guarantee that the communications will not at any moment be cut. This, again, is often a question of time, as a place may be non-productive as regards supplies, and dependent, therefore, upon accumulated stores which necessarily diminish by the lapse of time. Such places fall if the communications are cut for a sufficient length of time. It follows from this that all places supplied from over sea fall ultimately to the holder of the command of the sea in war. The fall may be delayed according to the proportion of supplies stored, but sooner or later the fall is certain.

The condition of an indifferent sea is, we shall observe, one that passes more and more out of consideration as history goes on. With every improvement in marine architecture, especially with every improvement in marine propulsion, distances are measured by shorter times; and as time is the real measure of distance in war, shorter times mean shorter distances, or, in other words, that the area commanded by any given naval force continually extends.

If, in the kind of operations we have been discussing, relative times in passing over the sea were the only times to be taken into account, the improvements in marine architecture spoken of would have little modifying effect on the art of naval war.* But, obviously, this is not so in all cases of attacks over sea upon territory, unless the necessary duration of attack has diminished in like ratio. During the period over which naval history extends, it is not easy to show that there was any change in this respect; and perhaps in the steam wars of the later dates, the only manifest advance has been the use of small steam-boats in towing troops and stores to land.

But if the process of attack on any place by forces coming over

* It will probably be seen, when we come to speak of the tactics of the open sea, that this is so to a great extent in that field of operations.

sea has not been hastened in like proportion to the increased rapidity of the passage over sea, then it follows that what used to be indifferent seas may have become of doubtful command, and local command of the sea may have become less assured.

Taking the hypothetical example already used, of Jamaica, Martinique, and St. Lucia: if we suppose the ships of an earlier date took four or five weeks to beat up from Jamaica to St. Lucia against the trade-wind, and ships of a later date only three weeks, the result would be that if there were a naval force at Jamaica in both cases, success by the expedition from Martinique would be less assured at the later date than at the earlier. For while the force required to overcome and occupy St. Lucia may be assumed equal in both cases, and the time during which the conquest is proceeding, and, therefore, during which the conquering force is dependent on the sea for supply and reinforcement, may also be assumed equal in both cases, the time is shortened within which the invading expedition is safe from interruption by the Jamaica force. And coming to steam wars, the very much shortened passage from Jamaica must tend to put it out of the power of Martinique to calculate at all on having an indifferent sea to pass over.

The general result of improved marine architecture, therefore, must be to put a check upon all territorial attacks which depend upon an indifferent sea. As the same cause must tend to make a doubtful command of the sea more doubtful, and a command of the sea more assured, the general result would appear to be, rarer opportunities for territorial attacks across a sea which is not commanded, but much more certainty in the results of expeditions carried on by the power which holds a command of the sea that cannot be challenged. I think it will appear that the general course of naval history bears out in practice these propositions which we accept in theory.

It is important, before we begin the study of particular cases of success or failure in attacks on territory from over sea, that we should have not only some fairly clear conceptions of the conditions under which expeditions pass over sea with regard to their possible interruption by naval force during passage, and the cutting of communications by like forces after the attack has developed or been completed, but also some classified notions of the natures of attacks and defences.

Broadly these fall into two categories—(1) where the object is ravage and destruction, (2) where the object is conquest and occu-

pation. These are really chiefly distinguished by the question of time, but as usual in all classifications the two run into one another in what is sometimes a perplexing way. The bombardment of Algiers, for instance, like the bombardments of Sweaborg and Odessa, as well as those numerous attacks on the French coast towns and ports which I have shown in previous chapters to follow our command in the Channel, fall without question into the first category. So does that landing of troops at Ostend in 1798 mentioned in chapter viii. But the attack on Sevastopol was made with a simply destructive object, and yet developed into a long occupation of the country south of the harbour. The distinctions between the attacks on Ostend and Sevastopol are only to be found in the differences in the magnitudes of the undertakings, and of the times occupied. And the importance of the time question as a classifier comes in when we remember that the Ostend expedition might have been conducted to success, though there had been a vastly superior French naval force at Brest; whilst if there had been in any part of the world a superior Russian naval force, it would have been impossible for success to have attended the expedition to the Crimea.

It follows, therefore, that these merely ravaging and destructive attacks, if made with any prospects of success, must, if made across a doubtfully commanded sea, take time into account. They cannot be attempted at all unless it is known that a local and temporary command of the sea is secure. They cannot be made, as it were, in the dark, with the possibility of running into the jaws of a superior naval force on the spot. But more than this, the whereabouts and power of the nearest naval force must be ascertained, and there must be a comparison between the time the destructive action will occupy and that within which relieving naval force can arrive. And to have reasonable hope of success there must be margin of two kinds. The probable time that the destructive operation will occupy must be over-estimated; that which the relieving force will require before it can come on the spot must be under-estimated. And again there must be a margin in estimating the strength of the possible relieving force. It does not follow that the destructive operation will not be interrupted, even disastrously, by inferior naval force.

Missiessy's ravaging and destructive expedition to the West Indies in 1805, which has been noticed in the previous chapter, was a remarkable success. It was undertaken in view of the fact that

there was no naval force in the West Indies* to oppose his 5 sail of the line, and that it was not probable that a superior naval force would arrive in time to interfere with him. So far as Villeneuve's expedition in the same year was designed for ravaging and destruction it was a failure, because the sufficient, though inferior, force of Lord Nelson arrived in those waters before time permitted even the commencement of the operations.

But it is manifest that as practically time and the magnitude of the forces engaged are measures of each other, light attacks for the purpose of ravaging and destruction have always much more chances of success across a doubtfully commanded sea than those of magnitude and importance. And it would seem from a general survey of naval history that as the doubtful command of the sea becomes less and less doubtful, as passing more and more completely into the hands of one power, so do ravaging and destructive attacks at the hands of the gradually weakening naval power tend to grow more and more insignificant until they cease altogether, as either being impossible to conduct to success, or as involving risks of failure which outweigh the prospects of success.

Another difficulty in the strict classification is that expeditions intending conquest are of two kinds; one requiring time and open communications, and the other requiring neither, and therefore falling, as regards its chances of success or failure, under the same set of conditions as surround an expedition which is merely ravaging and destructive. The first class need not be dilated on. It is obvious that if time enters, as we have seen, into the conditions of success or failure in mere ravaging and destructive attacks over a doubtfully commanded sea, time must enter still more largely into the conditions which make conquest and occupation after attack possible. Take Gibraltar as an apposite and familiar instance. The place was captured by a small part of Sir George Rooke's fleet in a very short time. But the sea was doubtfully commanded, and had the remainder of Sir George Rooke's fleet not been able to hold its own, and to beat the French fleet three weeks after at the battle of Malaga, Gibraltar must have immediately passed out of our hands again, as it was in no state to have resisted so soon after occupation. Supposing,

* Cochrane's squadron of 7 sail of the line, 5 of which afterwards proceeded to the West Indies, was watching Ferrol until February 28th, 1805, and did not reach Barbados till April 3rd. There were then only 2 sail of the line in the West Indies, 1 at Jamaica and 1 at Barbados. Missiessy sailed on January 17th from Rochefort. He had finished his raiding expeditions by the 16th March, and probably quitted the West Indies just as Cochrane arrived there.

therefore, that only sufficient force had been sent to attack and capture Gibraltar, there was time enough for its capture, but not time enough to make sure of holding it, even against attack, but certainly not against investment.*

Perhaps Napoleon's descent upon Egypt, already mentioned, is an illustration of the same case. Carried out over a doubtfully commanded sea as that expedition was, the descent itself—though by the narrowest possible margin, as the sails of the arriving French and departing English were seen from Alexandria on the same day—was concluded with speed and facility. But the enterprize was a failure, because the army could not secure itself in the country before its communications were cut.

But where the expedition, bent on conquest and occupation, expects assistance in the territory which it proceeds to occupy, the whole case is altered. Once the descent is made, the naval operation is complete, and the communication over sea of the landed forces may be cut without injury to them because reinforcement and supply are not expected over sea, but are designed to come from the territory on which the descent is made. Of course this expectation may be falsified, and then the expedition is a failure. If it is not falsified, there is nothing on the water to prevent its being a success. Prominent and familiar illustrations of these points are readily drawn from naval history. The descent of the Dutch, under the Prince of Orange, on the south coast of England, was a success because the invaders were welcomed by a majority of the people, and because in consequence, the naval operation was complete as soon as the last man had landed. Nothing that the English fleet could do after this landing, could in the least affect the issue, and consequently that fleet did nothing.† Had there been a miscalculation of the support likely to be given to the Prince, the case would have been on all fours with that of Napoleon

* Minor illustrations are often more forcible, because less extraneous matter creeps in, than great ones. The following passage relating to one of the operations of the Count de Grasse in the West Indies, in May 1781, puts a complete case exactly. "Le même jour, l'escadre se plaça au vent de Sainte-Lucie afin d'être en mesure de combattre les Anglais, si ceux-ci se présentaient au vent de l'île, et de les joindre, s'ils arrivaient par dessus le vent. Le Marquis de Bouillé débarqua, dans la nuit, au Gros-Ilét, avec douze cents hommes. Après avoir reconnu l'impossibilité de terminer, en quelques semaines, les travaux de défence nécessaires pour mettre cette position à l'abri de toute attaque, il se rembarqua avec ses troupes."—*Histoire de la Marine Française pendant la Guerre de l'Indépendance Américaine.* Par E. Chevalier, Capitaine de Vaisseau.

† I am of course mindful of the political aspect of the question, but did not the military conditions make the politics as far as the fleet was concerned?

in Egypt; and a battle of Torbay might have sealed the fate of the invaders by cutting their communications with Holland.

Nearly similar was the landing of French troops in Ireland for the support of James. The naval work of the French was over before Herbert met them in Bantry Bay, and even had he beaten them thoroughly the issue would have been little affected. This illustration is only incomplete, because it was not possible in those days for the English fleet to cut the communications between Ireland and France.

Ireland furnishes illustrations on the other side also, as, for instance, in the case of the Spanish landing at Kinsale in 1601, mentioned in my first chapter. Here the expected support failed, and the Spaniards found themselves invested by land with their sea communications cut. An ignominous surrender was the only course open to them. So, again, with the landing of the French in Killala Bay, in 1798, referred to in my eighth chapter. The expected support was not received, and the forces, having their sea communications cut, necessarily surrendered.

We see then, generally, that what may be done by way of expedition over a sea which is not commanded by the Power making the descent on the land, depends on the time required to achieve success, supposing there is no interruption. Lighter attacks can be undertaken when heavy and serious ones could not be thought of. But it necessarily follows that heavy forces cannot be used for light attacks. Confessedly, the risks of the light attacks must be great, and these risks are not lessened by attaching to the attacking force a defending or covering naval force which, though strong, is not master of the sea passed over. The success of the light attack is wholly resting on the evasion of possible naval defending force. Every addition to it lessens the chances of successful evasion, and attracts, as it were, increased defending force. When Bompart's squadron left Brest for Lough Swilly, in September 1798, the force was so large that it was worth following up by the look-out frigates, and the result was its destruction by Sir John Warren.* Had the troops for landing gone away in transports entirely unprotected by naval force, the war-ships that actually convoyed them might have engaged the attention of the look-out frigates, and the troops might have been landed without Sir John Warren's knowing anything about it. Unless the convoying force was certain of a local command of the sea—unless a naval force large enough to defy Sir John Warren was sent—it was mere waste of naval force to send any at all.

* See Chap. VIII.

Success was no nearer by sending a comparatively weak naval force, but failure would certainly be much more severe and bitter. So, as I have already observed, Napoleon's taking the fleet with him to Egypt was a mistake in strategy. He courted, in a sense, the battle of the Nile; for if the fleet could not secure him the command of the sea, it could do nothing, and if—as, in fact, was the case—he was depending on an indifferent sea, the taking of his fleet with him was the very thing to convert the sea he passed over into one doubtfully commanded, as not only attracting the British naval force in that direction, but leaving it free to go there. If the strength of Napoleon's naval force had been left at Toulon, Nelson could not possibly have quitted his watch on that port.

This brings us to consider that if an expedition of magnitude, with an object of attack which requires time to elapse before surrender can be expected, be undertaken with any reasonable hopes of success across a doubtfully commanded sea, it must be protected by a naval force sufficiently large either to mask the possibly intercepting naval force in his port or ports, or a covering force, quite apart from the expeditionary force, and sufficiently large to defy, at least on equal terms, any possible naval force which the enemy may bring to bear, must accompany it. To be really secure, both things will be done. There will be, at a distance from the scene of the attacking operations, naval force masking the enemy, and there will be at the scene of operations, a covering naval force prepared to act in case of the unexpected happening.

We shall see, in the course of our investigations, fairly abundant illustrations of all these different points. We shall class the illustrations as we go on, and when the outlines of the great variety of cases necessary to be studied are complete, we ought to be in a very fair position to judge of the chances of failure or success in any hypothetical proposition of this kind which may be put to us as determining the conduct of a future naval war.

Of the natures of these attacks, and the sort of forces employed, I must say a word or two. We shall find the attacks made by ships unassisted by troops extremely rare, and almost confined to cases of bombardment by the Power in unquestioned command of the sea. Bombardments, by way of reprisal on the part of the admittedly inferior naval Power, are almost absent; but especially in the later epochs of naval history, they tend to frequency on the part of the Power in command of the sea, and are sometimes the object of special preparation. Of this last class are the periodical bombardments of French seaports opening into the Channel, which

have already been alluded to in passing; the bombardment of Gibraltar by the Spaniards, the bombardment of Sweaborg, and, to some extent, bombardments of Confederate works by the Federals in the American Civil War.

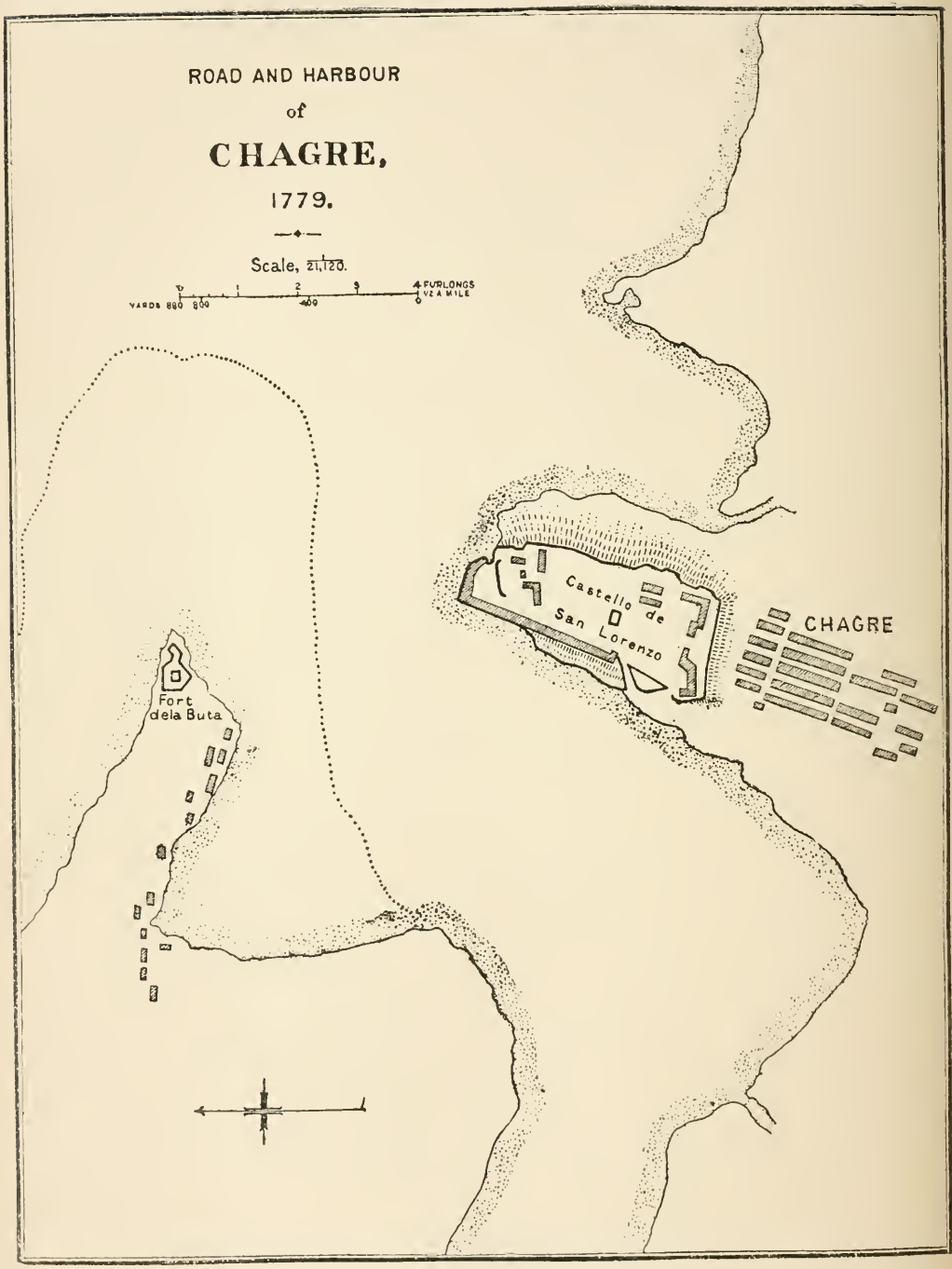
Of bombardments by ordinary men-of-war, practically unassisted by any special appliances, we have the notable instance of Copenhagen, although the regular forts bombarded were less powerful, perhaps, than those extemporized out of ships. Then we might instance Algiers, Acre, and, in our own time, Odessa and Alexandria.

A class of attack by ships alone, which had an early example in Sir John Duckworth's operations in 1807, in forcing the passage of the Dardanelles, had a high development in the American Civil War, and sometimes possessed there a special interest from the employment of sub-marine mines. In these cases the bombardment of the opposing forts was a means to an end—namely, the securing of a passage to an object of attack beyond them. To some extent, the attack by ships on the Peiho Forts in 1859 may be said to belong to this class of operations; but if so, it must take its place among the few failures.

Simply destructive bombardments, without any immediate object beyond destruction, whether conducted on a large or a small scale, are found to be rare. And the kind of destructive bombardment by even a single ship, of which we shall find examples in the Chilo-Peruvian war, seem to be modern in conception and execution, but still only competent to the power in command of the sea.

Bombardments by ships in assistance of troops attacking by land are more frequent, although they may be said generally to occupy a strictly subordinate place; such, for instance, as was exemplified in the bombardment of the Sevastopol forts by our ships during the progress of the siege.

The main attack being thus in nearly all cases military, we shall note the part that fortifications and works generally bear in the defence. The landings, it will be seen, are never made, if the thing can be avoided, under fire of the works. On the other hand, it is extremely rare to find works so perfectly arranged that the assault must be, as it were, delivered direct from the sea. To some degree at least, the situation of Gibraltar and its capture by direct assault from the sea is unique. In considering the case, it will be necessary to dwell upon the astonishing power of resistance offered by works that cannot be assaulted except on their sea faces.


ROAD AND HARBOUR
of
CHAGRE,
1779.
Scale, 1/120.
YARDS 880 440
1 2 3 4 FURLONGS
1/2 A MILE
Castello de San Lorenzo
CHAGRE
Fort dela Buta

The reflection may be found to have led to the general system of fortification adopted in a bygone age.

It seems to have been understood that direct assault from the sea was so inherently difficult, that very slight works guarding against it would always be sufficient to turn the attention of the enemy away from that kind of attack, to one more certain and more easy from the land side. And this being so, the idea of a "citadel," descending apparently in a direct line from the mediæval "keep," seems to have nearly always governed the system of fortification adopted, and we shall meet instances where the policy bore its expected fruit.*

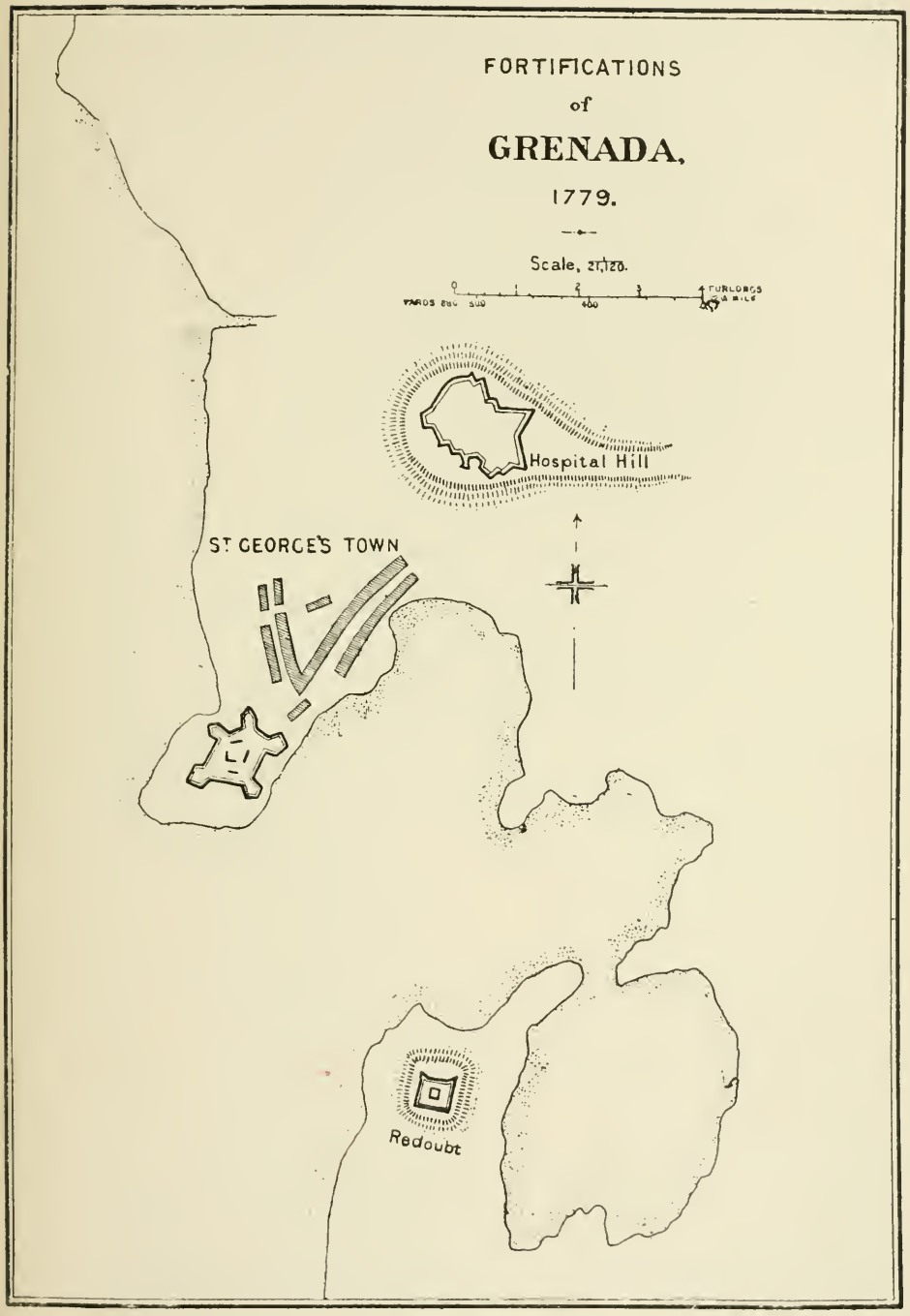
This policy of preparing a complete fortress as a citadel, supplied to stand investment and siege, obviously presupposed the occupation by the enemy of the surrounding country, and therefore assumed that his hands would be left free for whatever ravage and destruction could be compassed. This condition again implied the presence on the territory of an enemy's force superior to the garrison, for if the force landed were inferior to the garrison it would be met and beaten before it was able to ravage or destroy; unless, indeed, its operations were so swift that they could be concluded before the garrison was able to put in an appearance. The provision of a citadel therefore assumed the successful landing of a superior force, and did not assume powers of preventing destruction and ravage beyond a very small area surrounding the fortress. But it assumed the possibility of so delaying the final success of the enemy that either relief might come, or that the supply and reinforcement of the enemy might fail, before the fortress fell, and in that case the garrison recovered possession of the territory. The citadel, however, if it was found competent to hold out until relief arrived, or the enemy's supplies failed, might prevent material ravage if all that was most precious and most necessary to preserve from ravage were assembled either inside the citadel or within the area protected by its guns. The existence of such

* The system is illustrated by the accompanying plans of the fortifications of Chagre on the mainland of South America, and of Grenada in the island of that name. The originals from which the plans were traced are in the library of the United Service Institution. The citadels were generally on, or close to the coast, but not always; but whether they were on the coast or inland, the object seems to have been to make them at least as strong on the land side as they were on the sea side. Generally, too, as in both these instances, the citadels may have covered, but did not enclose the town. Sometimes we meet towns well protected on the land side and hardly at all on the sea side, and on looking over a number of plans one does not detect as much anxiety for the safety of the sea side as desire to be prepared for a land attack. It could hardly have been otherwise, if experience of attack was to be any guide.

an arrangement would naturally tend to preclude attacks unless there was ample time for the reduction of the fortress by the usual methods. But this is only another way of saying that the heart of the invaded country lies in the citadel. If it is otherwise, and occupation is intended, and the country may be held without the possession of the citadel, the latter may be neglected, as it will fall by the mere lapse of time.

An apposite reflection may here be made. If the possession of the citadel involves the possession of the territory, and it falls, the new possessors of it become as strong as the old ones. In other words, any defence of this kind—as we shall see in many examples—cuts both ways. A place difficult to take is difficult to retake, if the defence is fixed on the land; but a place depending on naval force for its defence; that is to say, a place difficult to take in the presence of naval force, and only to be possessed by the holder of the superior naval force, may be much easier to retake than it was to take, as the naval force which allowed the capture may prove inferior to that which comes to recapture. The superior naval power may suffer more prolonged losses of territory which he has fortified and garrisoned, than of territory which he has only garrisoned, and which is without a citadel. The naval defence, that is, the command of the sea over which alone a hostile approach can be made, is therefore on all grounds the most perfect. Apart from it, the territory can only be protected by a garrison, or by a garrison with a citadel. Supposing a temporary loss of command of the sea, conquest of the garrison may be made by landing a superior force. On resumption of the command of the sea, and consequent stoppage of reinforcements and supplies to the new garrison, the territory is easily retaken. But if the new garrison has possessed itself of a supplied citadel, the task of recapture becomes as much more difficult as the works of the citadel have added to the resisting strength of the new garrison. Supposing the superior naval power then admits the possibility of forces being landed on portions of its territory, it may be a question of policy whether the citadel as a substitute for a stronger garrison—which is its real character and office—is really a wise and economical institution. Many occasions will arise in the next few chapters when these reflections will naturally present themselves.

But we shall hardly avoid the conviction, I think, especially after a study of West Indian history, that command of the sea is the only real defence for territory which can be captured by


FORTIFICATIONS
of
GRENADA,
1779.
Scale, 2 1/2 in.
Hospital Hill
ST GEORGE'S TOWN
Redoubt

expeditions over it. Whether our forefathers, or our forefathers' enemies, wisely spent their money over garrisons and works which generally failed when the time came, rather than over simply driving the enemy off those seas, and keeping them out of them by a superiority of naval force, which *never failed*, is perhaps a question not to be determined so long as we are unaware of the relative proportions of the sums so spent.

If the garrisons and works were wholly insignificant in cost compared with the sums spent on the endeavour to obtain and keep the command of the sea, we might possibly say that the minority of instances in which garrisons and works prevented the West Indian islands from changing hands justified the policy. But if the former expenditure bore any considerable proportion to the latter, it might be possible to found an argument on the other side.

In all attacks made over sea against territory, we shall note one almost universal rule. No attacks of magnitude are ever known direct from a distant base. The desire for sheltered, but not necessarily protected waters, forming a naval base near at hand for any operations against territory, has apparently never slackened from the beginning, and is best illustrated by the conduct of the Federals in the Civil War. Bases in their own territory being inconveniently distant from the scene of their operations against Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah, they wrested ports—as at Cape Hatteras and Port Royal—from the hands of their enemy, and employed them for their own purposes as bases of naval operations.

Recapitulating, then, we have before us in the next three or four chapters the investigation by the light of naval history of the circumstances and conditions under which expeditions designed for the descent upon the land pass over the sea, and succeed or fail in their objects. We shall note that the strategical condition of the sea to be passed over is a primary element to be taken into consideration, and that it falls naturally under three heads :—

(1.) Where the sea is *indifferent*; no naval force, properly so called, enters either into attack or defence ; where both are essentially military and conducted entirely on land.

(2.) Where the command of the sea is *doubtful*. That is, where the expedition may be interfered with by naval force either on its way to the point of attack, at the point of attack, or by the subsequent cutting of its communications by sea.

(3.) Where the command of the sea is *assured*. That is, where it is either impossible that any naval force can interfere as above, or at least where there is reasonable probability that no naval force capable of interfering by sea can make its appearance before the completion of all the objects aimed at in the attack.

We are to note cases of failure where the causes have been purely military, occurring after the landing has been completed. Of some, where causes of failure have been moral, as where the naval and military authorities have disagreed. Of some where the mere appearance, or even the rumour, of naval force has prevented, or caused the abandonment of the expedition; and of others where the cutting of the communications by sea has brought about a failure when ostensibly the work was completed.

In most cases we shall be able to see what it was that conduced to success, what it was that enforced failure; and when our historical survey is concluded we shall probably have some idea, more or less founded on evidence, of what is impossible, possible, probable, and certain, in those operations of naval war which are mentioned at the head of this chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea succeed or fail.

The two most conspicuous examples of failure, the Armada and the Battle of Lissa are found at the beginning and end of naval history.—The Armada expedition described.—Causes of its failure parallel to those bringing about the failure of the Italians at Lissa.—And of Napoleon in Egypt.—Descents conducted over a doubtful sea must be expected to fail.—Descents upon friendly shores illustrated by those on Ireland in 1689, &c.—The commencement of the long series of captures and recaptures of the West India Islands in 1690, exhibits all the elements of success in commanded sea, and co-operation between army and navy on the understanding that the navy places the army in position and then takes but a minor share in the attack.

It is not a little remarkable that the two failures of attacks on territory most conspicuous from their magnitude and completeness should lie, the one near the very beginning of the historical record, and the other near the end of it. The whole naval force of Spain, and a great part of her military force, were concentrated for a descent on the shores of England in the year 1588. The whole naval force of Italy, and some part of her military force were brought together for the conquest of the island of Lissa in the year 1866. Both undertakings were utter failures, and palpably from the same cause. The strategical error committed was the same that Napoleon committed in his descent upon Egypt, and that de Conflans intended to commit, had Hawke not interfered with him too much beforehand. I do not here propose to describe the failure of the Italians at Lissa, as that will come in its due chronological order, but it is necessary to mention it in juxtaposition with the failure of the Armada, as each throws light upon the other, and enables us to understand more clearly where the fundamental error lay.

In describing the events surrounding the sailing, voyage, and dispersal of the Armada, I have found that I cannot possibly do

better than to quote largely from a paper by Professor Laughton, read at the Royal Institution of Great Britain on May 4, 1888, and entitled "The Invincible Armada, a Tercentenary Retrospect." In preparing his paper, Mr. Laughton has consulted the best authorities, and its value is of no passing character.

"Drake's brilliant raid through the West Indies determined Philip on a decided course. For the past fifteen years the invasion of England had been mooted as a thing desirable and not impossible. It had been proposed by the Duke of Alva in 1569, and more recently in 1583, after his victory over Strozzi and his scratch fleet—mostly of French adventurers—at Tercera; the Marquis of Santa Cruz had urged it as a necessary step towards the reduction of the rebellious Netherlands.* The Duke of Parma had written to the same effect, repeating that English soldiers were of little count in presence of the Spanish veterans, and adding a statement which seems to have obtained general credence among the Spaniards, that the English ships at Tercera had been the first to fly; had, in fact, played a part somewhat resembling that of the Egyptian ships at Actium. It is quite possible that there were some English ships at Tercera, though it is doubtful; if there were, they certainly did not imitate Strozzi's ill-judged and suicidal manœuvre of closing with the Spaniards, and, small blame to them, effected their escape. True or not, however, it appears certain that this reported flight of the English ships did have very considerable weight with many of the King's advisers; and so advised, and at the same time impelled by wrath, he determined on the attempt. The Marquis of Santa Cruz was called on for his scheme, which extended to gigantic proportions. Everything was to be done from Spain. The whole shipping of the empire was to be collected. Every available soldier was to be mustered. According to the very detailed project submitted by Santa Cruz on 22nd March, 1586, the numbers amounted to :—

	No.	Tons.	Sailors.	Soldiers.
Great ships of war -	150	77,250		
Store ships - -	40	8,000	16,612	55,000
Smaller vessels - -	320	25,000		

besides—

	No.	Sailors and Fighting Men.	Rowers.
Galeasses - - -	6	720	1,800
Galleys - - -	40	3,200	8,000

* *La Armada Invencible*, por el Capitan de Navio C. Fernandez Duro. Tom. i., p. 241.

Giving a total of 556 ships of all kinds, and 85,332 men, to which were to be added cavalry, artillerymen, volunteers, and non-combatants, bringing up the number of men to a gross total of 94,222.*

"A project so vast and so costly did not come within the King's idea of 'practical politics'; he resolved on the expedition, but conceived the idea of doing it at a cheaper rate by utilizing the army in the Low Countries. From this grew up the scheme which ultimately took form. The Duke of Parma was to prepare an army of invaders in the Netherlands, and a number of flat-bottomed boats to carry it across the sea. The Marquis of Santa Cruz was to bring up the Channel a fleet powerful enough to crush any possible opposition, and carrying with it a body of troops which, when joined with those under Parma, would form an army at least as numerous as that which Santa Cruz had detailed as sufficient.

"The necessary preparations were extensive, and it is not quite clear that, as they became more definite, Philip's ardour did not somewhat slacken. The cost was certain, the issue was doubtful; and even if successful, the result might perhaps not be exactly what was desired. Philip had always posed as a supporter of the Queen of Scots, but the doubt must have suggested itself whether it was worth while, at this great cost, to conquer a kingdom for her, a kingdom which, with her French blood and French proclivities, would become virtually a French province. The death of the Queen of Scots, on 8-18 February 1587, removed this difficulty. Even if the conquered kingdom was to be handed over to James, James was not bound to France as his mother had been. Placed on the throne of England by Spanish arms, he might be expected, or even constrained, to hold it virtually as a Spanish fief.

"Preparations were therefore now hurried on in earnest. Ships were collected at the several ports, and especially at Lisbon and Cadiz. It seemed probable that the invasion would be attempted in the summer of 1587, when, some months before, Drake, with a fleet of twenty-four ships, all told, appeared on the coast. The orders under which he sailed from England on 2nd April were to prevent the different Spanish squadrons from joining, and where he found their ships to destroy them. It was a grand and masterful step, but it had scarcely been ordered before the Queen repented

* Duro, vol. i., p. 253.

of it. Counter orders were sent post haste to Plymouth, but Drake had already sailed. They followed him, but never found him; perhaps the bearer of them was not too eager to find him. At any rate, Drake never got these orders, and acting on those first given, with which he had sailed, he did, at Cadiz, singe the King of Spain's beard in a most effective manner. Thirty-seven ships there collected were sunk, burnt, or brought away. They were as yet unarmed, unmanned, and when the forts were once passed, could offer no resistance. Other damage Drake did, insulting Santa Cruz in the very port of Lisbon, offering battle, which Santa Cruz was in no position to accept.

"The destruction of shipping and stores at Cadiz necessarily delayed the equipment of the Spanish fleet; the year passed away, and it was not ready. The following February (1588) the Marquis of Santa Cruz died. The loss to Spain was incalculable, for he was the only man who by birth was entitled, and by experience was competent, to command such an expedition as he had set on foot. Curiously, however, the King and his court do not seem to have realised their loss, and with a light heart appointed Don Alonso Perez de Guzman el Bueno, Duke of Medina-Sidonia, to the vacant command. Medina-Sidonia, now in his 38th year, was a man with no qualification for the post except his distinguished birth, and a gentleness of temper which, it was perhaps thought, would fit better with the idea of making him subordinate to the Duke of Parma. . . . His answer to the King on being ordered to take on himself the command is in itself a curiosity. 'The business,' he wrote, 'was so great, so important, that he could not conscientiously undertake it, being, as he was, altogether without experience or knowledge of either the sea or of war.' His objections were, however, overruled; and in an evil hour for his reputation, he consented. The equipment of the fleet was pushed on, and by the middle of May it was ready to sail from the Tagus. It did actually sail on 20th–30th May."

A certain amount of alarm, even of terror, was created in England by the approach of the Armada, but "There was one class of Her Majesty's subjects, the members of which had not this exalted opinion of Spanish power and Spanish prowess. For the last twenty years English sailors had been, in their own irregular way, fighting the Spaniards on every sea where they were to be met, and had come to the conclusion that, whatever the Spaniard might be ashore, afloat he was but a poor creature; the experiences of Drake, Hawkyns, Fenton, Fenner, and a score of others whose

names are less familiar, had proved that, even with great apparent odds in their favour, Spaniards were not invincible. . . . What English sailors thought of them may be judged from a letter written by Fenner, who was with Drake when he burnt the shipping at Cadiz. 'Twelve of Her Majesty's ships,' he said, 'were a match for all the galleys in the King of Spain's dominions.'

"But the power of Spain, the tavern gossip and braggadocio of Lisbon, and the reports of spies who felt in honour bound to give full value for their hire, grossly exaggerated the size, the might, the armament, and the equipment of the fleet as it sailed from Lisbon. Of the numbers, size, and armament I shall have to speak presently. The equipment, with which we are just now concerned, was so well arranged and so perfect, that by the time the fleet reached Cape Finisterre, vast quantities of the provisions were found to be bad, putrid, and fit for nothing but to be thrown overboard. The ships were short of water, probably because the casks were leaky. The ships themselves were also leaking—strained, it was said, by the heavy weather, but really from being over-masted. Several of them were with difficulty kept afloat; some were dismasted; and the distress was so general that Medina-Sidonia determined to put into Corunna to refit. This he did, but without taking any precautions to let his intention be known through the fleet. The Scilly Isles had been given out as the rendezvous in case of separation, and some dozen of the ships, finding they had lost sight of the Admiral, did accordingly go to the neighbourhood of the Scilly Isles, where they were duly seen and reported at Plymouth. Their recall, the collecting the fleet at Corunna, the refitting, the re-provisioning, all took time. The damage was so great, the number of sick so large, the season getting so advanced, that a council of war urgently recommended postponing the expedition till next year. The King's orders were, however, imperative; and the fleet finally sailed from Corunna on the 12th–22nd of July.

"The main part of the English fleet was meantime mustered at Plymouth, under the command of Lord Howard of Effingham, the Lord Admiral of England, with whom were Drake and Hawkyns as Vice and Rear-Admirals; several noblemen, including Lord Thomas Howard, the Admiral's nephew, his two sons-in-law, Lord Sheffield and Sir Robert Southwell, and that quaint mixture of courtier, adventurer, and buccaneer, the Earl of Cumberland; together with many genuine sea dogs, of whom the best known

are Frobiser, Fenner, and Fenton. Large numbers of merchant ships, levied by the Queen or by their own towns, had joined the fleet, which, as it lay at Plymouth consisted of about 80 sail, all told. From the time of his return from the coast of Spain in the previous summer, Drake had been urgent that he should be sent out again, with a still more powerful squadron, to repeat the blow. Hawkyns, Frobiser, Fenner—all seamen of experience—were of the same opinion. Howard, guided by their advice, repeatedly pressed the importance of the step; but Elizabeth steadfastly refused. She hoped perhaps for peace; more probably perhaps, she hoped that the war might continue to be carried on in the same cheap and desultory fashion as during the last three years, and was unwilling to set Philip the example of more sustained efforts. And so, notwithstanding the prayers and entreaties of Howard and Drake, backed up by the opinion of every man of experience, no further attempt was made on the Spanish ports. It is probable enough that had Drake been permitted, he would have kindled such a blaze in the Tagus, or in the harbour of Corunna, as would have effectually prevented the invasion which was now on foot.

"It has been said over and over again* that the Duke of Medina-Sidonia was ordered by Philip to hug the French coast, so as to avoid the English fleet, and to reach the Straits of Dover with his force intact. Nothing can well be more inaccurate. He was on the contrary, ordered, if he met Drake near the mouth of the Channel to fall on him and destroy him; it would be easier and more certain to destroy the English fleet piecemeal, than to allow it to collect in one. Nor do his instructions contain one word about hugging the French coast; on the contrary, they advise the Scilly Isles or the Lizard as a rendezvous, and suggest the propriety of seizing on some unfortified port in the south of England.† As a matter of fact, a position south of the Scilly Isles was given out as a rendezvous in the first instance; in the second, on sailing from Corunna, the rendezvous was Mounts Bay.‡

"In crossing the Bay of Biscay the Spaniards experienced bad weather, and were a good deal scattered: barely two-thirds of the

* Monson in *Churchill's Voyages*, vol. iii., p. 149., Lediard's *Naval History*, vol. i., p. 253. As, at any rate, Medina-Sidonia, by the testimony of both these authorities, acted in accordance with the determination of a council of war, the original orders are of less moment.

† Duro, vol. ii., p. 8.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii., pp. 27, 168.

fleet were in company when Medina-Sidonia sighted the Lizard on the morning of the 19th July, according to the English calendar, which I shall henceforth follow.

"Whilst the Duke of Medina-Sidonia was lying-to off the Lizard, on the 19th July, he was sighted by one of the English cruisers, the *Golden Hind*, commanded by Thomas Flemyng, who forthwith carried the news to the Admiral;* and, according to the familiar story, which I see no reason to doubt, found him, with the admirals and captains of the fleet, playing bowls on the Hoe.

"The following day, Saturday, the 20th, the Spanish fleet was collected off the Lizard and moved slowly eastwards. A council of war was held. They had learned that the English fleet was at Plymouth, and the great weight of opinion among the Spanish leaders was that they ought to attack it there. It has always been said that Medina-Sidonia was prevented from doing this by his instructions. The statement is inaccurate. The letter of his instructions distinctly permitted him to attack the English fleet; the spirit of them enjoined his doing it.† Fortunately, he misunderstood his instructions; he conceived that he was bound to go up Channel, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left until he could effect a junction with the Duke of Parma. Had he, on the 19th, when he first learned that the English fleet was at Plymouth, crowded sail with even such ships as he had with him, he might have entered the Sound that evening. The wind was from the S.W., and the English ships, penned in between the Spaniards and the shore, would have been forced to fight hand to hand; the result might easily have been disaster. The Spaniards neglected their chance, and it never recurred; for during Saturday the English got out of the Sound, and stretched along the coast to the westward. On Sunday morning, when the two fleets were first in presence of each other, the English were to windward, and by the weatherly qualities of their ships had no difficulty in keeping the advantage they had gained.

"And now, before the fighting begins, it is time to speak of the comparative force of the opposing fleets. We have all known from our infancy that the Spanish ships, as compared with the

* *State Papers, Domestic*, ccxv., 62.

† Monson has a curious paragraph which Mr. Laughton does not seem to have noticed. He says (Churchill, vol. iii., p. 304): "In 1588, when the Duke of Medina came for England, had he been furnished with a pilot that knew the Lizard, when he made it for the Ramhead, he had the next morning given an attempt upon our ships at Plimouth when he was not suspected or looked for."

English, were stupendous in point of size, marvellous in their strength; in guns and in number of men beyond all proportion. The numbers I give here, from the official Spanish record,* agree very well with those reported in England.†

" Ships.	Tons.	Guns.	Men.	
130	57,868	2,431	8,050	Seamen.
			18,973	Soldiers.
			1,382	Volunteers, &c.
			2,088	Rowers.
		Total - - -	30,493	

"In one point alone of this statement is the difference from the English account worth noticing. Barrow gives the number of Spanish guns as 3,165. To this I shall presently recur. Meantime, I have to point out that these numbers refer to the fleet as it left Lisbon. They had suffered a marked decrease before the fleet left Corunna, and a still further decrease before the fleet came into the Channel. Of the ships left behind I have no account. Some—and some large ships amongst them—certainly did not come on. Some, again, appear to have parted company on the voyage; and of four galleys, from which much had been expected, one was driven ashore and wrecked near Bayonne: the other three making very bad weather of it, returned to Spain.‡ Allowing for these losses, I think it doubtful whether even 120 ships of all sizes came into the Channel; the number of men did certainly not exceed 24,000; and, in the council of war held at Corunna, it was estimated as low as 22,500. On the other hand, the number of men borne in the English ships, when all collected together, is officially given as 15,925, to which ought to be added many more who were sent off from Plymouth on 21st July, or who joined as volunteers during the passage up Channel. It is difficult to estimate the gross total as less than from 17,000 to 18,000 men.

"Our idea of the Spanish ships has been also somewhat exaggerated. According to Barrow: 'The best of the Queen's ships placed alongside one of the first class of Spaniards would have been like a sloop of war by the side of a first rate.' In point of tonnage they were, in fact, the same. The largest Spaniard, the

* Duro, vol. ii., pp. 66. 83.

† Barrow's *Life of Drake*, p. 270.

‡ Duro, vol. i., p. 65; vol. ii., pp. 199, 142.

Regazona of the Levant squadron, is given as of 1,249 tons. The largest English ship, the *Triumph*, was of 1,100 tons, and many circumstances lead me to believe that the English mode of reckoning tonnage gave a smaller result than the Spanish.* There is no doubt, however, that the Spanish ships looked larger. Their poops and forecastles, rising tier above tier to a great height, towered far above the lower-built English. Not that the larger English ships were by any means flush-decked; but they were not so high-charged as the Spanish. The difference offered a great advantage to the Spaniards in hand-to-hand fighting; it made their ships leewardly and unmanageable even in a moderate breeze, and, added to the Spanish neglect of recent improvements in rig, rendered them very inferior to the English in the open sea.†

"And not only was there this inferiority of the ships; there was at least a corresponding inferiority of the seamen. The Spaniards were, in fact, to a great extent fair weather sailors. Some there doubtless were who had doubled Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope, but by far the greater number had little experience beyond the Mediterranean, or the equable run down the trades to the West Indies. To the English, on the other hand, accustomed from boyhood to the Irish or Iceland fisheries, in manhood to the voyages to the North-West with Frobiser or Davys, or round the world with Drake, the summer gales of the Channel were, by comparison, passing trifles—things to be warded off but not to be feared. Even if the men had been equal in quality, the Spanish ships were terribly under-manned. The seamen habitually gave place to the soldiers, and soldiers commanded; the seamen did the drudgery, and not one was borne in excess of what their soldier masters thought necessary. The absolute numbers speak for themselves, and one comparison will be sufficient. The *San Martin*, of 1,000 tons, the flag-ship of the Duke of Medina, had 177 seamen and 300 soldiers. The *Ark*, of 800 tons, the flag-ship of Lord Howard, appears to have had something like 300 seamen and 125 soldiers.

"More important, however, than even this inferiority of the Spanish ships and sailors was the inferiority of their guns and gunners. Now here I come on to what is, I believe, to most of you, new ground. You have always been accustomed to hear of

* Other modes of reckoning tonnage adopted in the following reign gave results varying from 20 to 50 per cent. more.—*State Papers, Domestic*, ccxxxvii., 64.

† Compare Monson in Churchill, vol. iii., pp. 312, 319.

the number and size of the Spanish guns. The statements to that effect are absolutely incorrect. The Spanish guns were, as a rule, small—4, 6, or 10-pounders, they were comparatively few, and they were execrably worked.* The simplest way to show this is by a comparative table of armaments. It is not perfect, it is not rigidly accurate; the means to construct a perfect or accurate table do not, I fear, exist; but, so far as it goes, the table embodies the best information attainable.

"The English armaments shown in it are from a list dated 1595–99,† and may possibly show some improvement on the armament of the ships carried in 1588. I see no reason, however, to suspect such. I have not been able to trace the original from which this paper was printed, but I have found of the same date, 1595, estimates for the armament of three ships now in building,‡ the ordnance for the first mentioned being described as 'answerable to the pieces that are in the *Mer Honour*.' I, therefore, show here also the armament of the *Mer Honour*, as given in the paper in the *Archæologia* already referred to.

Ships' names.	Tons.	Men.	No. of guns.	Weight of broadside in lbs.	Description of guns. Pounders—							Small pieces.
					60	30	24	18	12	9	6	
Spanish—												
S. Lorenzo	...	386	50	370	4	8	...	6	...	6	10	16
N. S. d. Rosario	1,150	422	41	195	...	3	7	4	...	1	...	26
Annunciada	703	275	24	67	...	...	...	3	...	3	...	18
Sta. Mar. d. Visari	666	307	18	54	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	12
English—												
Triumph	1,100	500	68	402	4	3	...	17	...	8	6	30
Ark	800	425	55	377	4	4	...	12	...	12	6	17
Nonpareil	500	250	56	264	2	3	...	7	...	8	12	24
Foresight	300	160	37	102	...	...	...	...	...	14	8	15
Tiger	200	100	22	83	...	...	...	...	...	6	14	2
Tramontana	150	70	21	52	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	9
Achates	100	60	13	36	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	7
Second Table.												
Mer Honour	800	...	41	281	...	4	...	15	...	16	4	2
Sept. 1595	?	...	44	299	...	4	...	16	...	18	4	2
Oct. 1595 I.	?	...	44	282	...	...	...	20	...	20	4	...
,, II.	?	...	36	222	...	...	...	16	...	12	8	...

"Another estimate that seems entitled to credit is that given of

* Duro, vol. ii., p. 237.

† *Archæologia*, vol. xiii., p. 27; Derrick's *Rise and Progress of the Royal Navy*, p. 31.

‡ *State Papers, Domestic*, cclxiii, 114; cclxv., 43.

the armament of the *Revenge*—a ship of the same size and number of men as the *Nonpareil*, which was taken by the Spaniards in 1591, and was reported by them to have 43 brass guns, 20 on the lower deck, of from 4,000 to 6,000 lbs. weight, and the rest from 2,000 to 3,000.* The greater weights corresponded to 60, 30, or 18-pounders; the smaller to the 9, and 6-pounders.

"Of the Spanish armament we cannot speak with the same absolute knowledge; but it seems admitted that the galeasses were the most heavily-armed ships of the fleet, and of these the *San Lorenzo*, which was taken off Calais, was the largest and heaviest. The report of her armament, given by people who had possession of her for some time, corresponds fairly well with the official statement.† The *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* was the largest ship captured by Drake and sent into Torbay.‡ Her armament is given from the official inventory taken at Torquay. She is spoken of by Duro as one of the most powerful and best ships of the fleet.§ The other two ships do not seem distinguished in any way from the others of the same size; they belonged to the Levant squadron, and are classed with the *San Juan de Sicilia* of 800 tons and 26 guns, which is spoken of as having taken a prominent part in the action of 29th July. I have not met with any account of the armament of the ships of the Portuguese squadron, including the *San Martin*, *San Felipe*, and *San Mateo*, of which all three were in the thickest of the fight, and the two last were driven ashore in a sinking state. Neither have I met with any inventory of the *Nuestra Señora de la Rosa*, the ship that was partially blown up and was sent into Weymouth. I do not, of course, suppose that the more effective fighting ships of the fleet were armed like the *Annunciada* or *Santa Maria de Visari*; but I do believe that the armament of these is a fair representative of that of a very large proportion of ships that have been counted as effective.

"I must note also, that whereas the Spanish ships of below 300 tons burden carried four or six small guns—a merely nominal armament—English ships of 200 tons carried a very respectable armament, and ships even still smaller were not altogether despicable. Of the way in which the English merchant ships were armed, we have no knowledge; but considering that the fitting them out for purposes of war was no novelty, that many of them had probably been on privateering cruises before, and that the

* Duro, vol. i., p. 76.

† *State Papers, Domestic*, ccxiii., 67. Duro, vol. i., p. 390.

‡ *State Papers, Domestic*, ccxv., 671.

§ Duro, vol. i., p. 834.

Pelican or *Golden Hind* in which Drake went round the world—a ship of nominally 100 tons—had 14 guns, I would distinctly question Barrow's judgment that, "looking at their tonnage, two-thirds of them, at least, would have been of little service, and indeed must have required uncommon vigilance to keep them out of harm's way.'* They were not, indeed, the ships that were to be found in the forefront of the fight—no more were the *Euryalus* or *Naiad* at Trafalgar—but I see no reason to doubt that they did, in their own way, render good and efficient service.

"It was not only in the number and weight of guns that the English had a great comparative advantage; they were immensely superior in the working of them. I may quote here from Captain Duro a very remarkable statement, which, however, is fully corroborated by original writers and by known facts. By the Spaniards, he says,† 'The cannon was held to be an ignoble arm; well enough for the beginning of the fray, and to pass away the time till the moment of engaging hand to hand, that is, of boarding. Actuated by such notions, the gunners were recommended to aim high, so as to dismantle the enemy and prevent his escape; but as a vertical stick is a difficult thing to hit, the result was that shot were expended harmlessly in the sea, or at best made some holes in the sails, or cut a few ropes of no great consequence.' On the other hand, the gun was the weapon which the English sailors had early learned to trust to. Their practice might appear contemptible enough to an *Excellent's* gun's crew, but everything must have a beginning. With no disparts or side scales, with no aid beyond, possibly, a marked quoin to lay the gun horizontal, and with shot which—perhaps a good inch less in diameter than the bore of the gun—wobbled from side to side, or from top to bottom, leaving the gun at an angle that chance dictated, the hitting the object aimed at was excessively doubtful. Still, by firing a great many shot, they did manage to get home with sufficient to do a good deal of damage. The Spanish accounts speaking of the quickness of the English fire, estimate the English expenditure of shot as about three times their own.‡

"There is another point which may very probably have also stood in the way of the Spanish gunners. Through the greater part of the last century, the ports of Spanish line-of-battle ships were made much too small, with the idea, apparently, of keeping out the enemy's musketry shot, but with the actual result that their guns could neither be trained, depressed, or elevated. In

* *Life of Drake*, p. 270. † Duro, vol. i., p. 77. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 377.

this way was possible such an action as that between the *Glorioso*, a 70-gun ship, and the *King George*, a frigate-built privateer of 32 guns, in 1747, in which the two ships engaged broadside to broadside for several hours without the privateer receiving any proportionate damage. In the beginning, some such fault was general, and to a very great extent the gun was brought to bear by the action of the helm; but it is at least probable that Spanish ships carried it to a still greater degree, and that this might, to some extent, exaggerate the badness of the Spanish gunnery practice, which was very bad indeed.

"All this was quite well known to Philip, and therefore to the principal officers in the fleet, before they left Lisbon. The King's instructions to Medina-Sidonia ran:—'You are especially to take notice that the enemy's object will be to engage at a distance, on account of the advantage which they have from their artillery and the offensive fireworks with which they will be provided; and, on the other hand, the object on our side should be to close and grapple and engage hand to hand.'* This, perhaps, may partly explain the comparatively small quantity of shot per gun provided for such a vast undertaking; a quantity so small that, notwithstanding the slowness of their fire, they ran short even after the skirmishes in the Channel.

"In estimating the opposing forces, this great superiority of the English armament must be taken into account. Of Spanish ships of 300 tons and upwards the number that left Lisbon was officially stated at 80, but of these 18 were rated as ships of burden (*urcas de carga*), and, though they carried troops and some guns, could not be counted as effective ships of war. Of the remaining 62, many ought to be reckoned in the same category. An armament such as that of the *Annunciada* or *Sta. Maria* speaks for itself. From the number of soldiers they carried, and from their lofty poops and forecastles, such ships would be dangerous enough in a hand-to-hand fight, but were perfectly harmless as long as they were kept at a distance. But counting all these, we have the following comparison of the fleets:—

	Spanish.		English.	
	Nos.	Tons. Average.	Nos.	Tons. Average.
Of 300 tons and upwards -	62	727	23	552
Of 200 to 300 tons - -	—	—	26	210
			49	

Duro, vol. ii., p. 9.

"The English ships of 200 tons being included as unquestionably superior as fighting machines to many of the much larger Spanish ships.

"I am dwelling upon these points, to many of which I do not think sufficient attention has been paid, not as in any way detracting from the superlative merit of the Englishmen who fought and won in this great battle, but as showing that their achievement, however great, was still within the bounds of human prowess. The Spaniards of that time were among the most splendid soldiers that the world has seen; and to speak of our men engaging them and defeating them, against such tremendous odds as are commonly shown, is not to exalt our heroes, but to travesty them into paladins of impossible romance, or, in spite of abundant evidence to the contrary, to represent them and the land they defended as saved from extermination only by the direct interposition of providence, and by a heaven-sent gale of wind.

"Time will not permit me, nor do I think it necessary, to describe to you in detail the fight of that eventful week; to tell you how on Sunday morning, 21st July, the English, having gained the wind, fell on the ships of the Spanish rear-guard, under the command of Don Juan Martinez de Recalde in the *Santa Ana*, and without permitting them to close, as they vainly tried to do, pounded them with their great guns for the space of three hours, with such effect that Recalde sent to Don Pedro de Valdes for assistance, his ship having been hulled several times and her foremast badly wounded; how Don Pedro's ship, the *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, in going to his assistance, fouled first one and then another of her consorts, lost her bowsprit, foremast and maintopmast, and was left by Medina-Sidonia, who conceived it to be his duty to push on to Dunkirk, even at the sacrifice of this large and valuable ship, which was taken possession of by Drake the next morning and sent into Torbay; how another ship, the *Nuestra Señora de la Rosa*, of 945 tons, was partially blown up and was similarly left to be taken possession of by order of the Admiral, and to be sent into Weymouth; how on the Tuesday there was another sharp action off Portland, and again a third on the Thursday off the Isle of Wight, when Recalde's ship, the *Santa Ana* of 768 tons, received so much further damage that she left the fleet and ran herself ashore near Havre; how the English, joined as they passed along by many small vessels full of men, but finding their store of shot running short, were content for the next day with closely following up the Spaniards, who on Saturday

afternoon anchored off Calais, whilst the English anchored about a mile to the westward and to windward of them. Here Howard was joined by the squadron of the narrow seas, under Lord Henry Seymour and Sir William Wynter, by the contingent of the city of London, under Nicholas Gorges, and by many private ships, bringing the number up to a gross total of nearly 200, a large portion of which were very small, but of which, as I have already said, 49 were effective ships of war. The Spanish numbers had been reduced by the loss of three, if not four, of their largest and best ships, and were further reduced off Calais by the loss of the *San Lorenzo*, the largest and most heavily armed of the galleons. For on Sunday night Howard sent eight fire-ships in amongst the Spanish fleet; the Spaniards, panic-struck, cut their cables, and by wind and tide were swept far to leeward. In the confusion the *San Lorenzo* damaged her rudder, and in the morning was driven ashore, and after a sharp fight captured by the boats of the *Ark* and some of the smaller ships. But the fleet was away off Gravelines, and there on that Monday, 29th July, was fought the great battle which, more distinctly perhaps than any battle of modern times, has moulded the history of Europe; the battle which curbed the gigantic power of Spain, which shattered the Spanish prestige, and established the basis of England's empire.

"It would be pleasant to dwell on the details of this great fight, to tell you how the Spaniards, having formed themselves in a half moon, convexity in front, were charged on the wings and centre by our fleet; on the westernmost or larboard wing by Drake, with Hawkyns, Frobiser, Fenton, Fenner, and others; in the centre by Howard and his kinsmen, with the Earl of Cumberland; and on the starboard wing by Seymour, with Wynter and the squadron of the narrow seas; how the wings were driven in on their centre; how the ships, thus driven together, fouled each other, and lay a helpless and inert mass, whilst the English pounded them in comparative safety. 'The fight,' Wynter wrote, 'continued from nine of the clock until six of the clock at night, in the which time the Spanish array bore away N.N.E., or north by east as much as they could, keeping company one with another. . . . I deliver it to your honour upon the credit of a poor gentleman, that out of my ship there was shot, 500 shot of demi-cannon (30½ lbs.), culverin (17½ lbs.), and demi-culverin (9½ lbs.); and when I was furthest off in discharging any of the pieces, I was not out of the shot of their harquebus, and most

times within speech one of another; and surely every man did well. No doubt the slaughter and hurt they received was great, as time will discover it; and when every man was weary with labour, and our cartridges spent, and munitions wasted—I think in some altogether—we ceased, and followed the enemy.'*

"The subject is one that tempts to pursue it still further, but time warms me to draw to a close. It must be enough then to say that the Spaniards were terribly beaten; that two of their largest ships, ships of the crack Portugal squadron, the *San Felipe* and *San Mateo*, ran themselves ashore on the Netherlands coast to escape foundering in the open sea. Howard says that three were sunk, and four or five driven ashore. In one case he can scarcely have been mistaken. 'On the 30th,' he says, 'one of the enemy's great ships was espied to be in great distress by the Captain (Robert Cross) of Her Majesty's ship called the *Hope*, who, being in speech of yielding unto the said Captain, before they could agree on certain conditions, sank presently before their eyes.' This may have been the *San Juan de Sicilia*, which was severely beaten in the fight and never returned to Spain, though it was not known how she was lost. The actual loss of life was certainly very great—how great was never known, for the pursuit of the English and the terrible passage round the west of Ireland prevented any attempt at official returns. Of the losses among the isles of Scotland and on the coast of Ireland, I do not intend now to speak. It is sufficient for my purpose to say that, according to the best Spanish accounts, which, in such an overwhelming disaster, are rather mixed, about half the original 130 got home again; some apparently by the simple process of not going farther than Corunna, some, as three of the galleys, by turning back before they crossed the Bay of Biscay."

Mr. Laughton does not touch, in this excellent sketch, on a material element in the failure of the Armada. The 19,000 soldiers that it was intended should be conveyed in the fleet did not form by any means the whole of the invading army. The main portion was to have been formed from the Duke of Parma's army, and was prepared to embark at Dunkirk, the Duke himself being indeed the real commander of the expedition. But our Allies, the Hollanders and Zealanders, took effective measures to prevent any junction between the two wings of the Spanish force, by interposing their own superior fleet. As Burchett puts it:—

The twenty-seventh of July the Spanish fleet came to an anchor before Calais, and

* Wynter to Walsingham, 1st August 1588.—*State Papers, Domestic*, ccxiv., 7.

not far from them anchored the English Admiral, who, by the accession of the ships under the Lord Seymour and Sir William Winter, had now a hundred and forty sail, all stout ships, though the main stress of the engagement lay not upon more than fifteen of them. The Spaniards were now very importunate with the Duke of Parma to send out forty fly-boats to their assistance, for that otherwise, by the unwieldiness of their ships, they could not engage the light and active vessels of the English. They also desired him to use all speed in embarking his army, and be ready to take the first opportunity, under their protection, of landing in England. But, besides that his flat-bottomed boats were become leaky, and that he was not in other respects in that readiness which had been concerted, he was prevented from complying with these demands by the ships of Holland and Zealand, which, under the command of Count Justin of Nassau, continued to block up the harbours of Dunkirk and Newport, the only ports from whence he could put to sea.*

Thus it is seen that even supposing there had been no encounters between the English and Spanish ships, or supposing the English had proved less superior than they were, still the great Armada was a palpable failure. Mr. Laughton does very rightly in pressing the point that in the collapse of the Armada there were no miracles, nor any special interpositions of Providence by gales of wind or otherwise. The case was simply that if Philip had been either better advised, or, being well advised, had been less headstrong, he would have known that not only was the task one most probably beyond his powers, but that it was impossible that he could succeed as he went about it. And it may be further observed that if Medina-Sidonia was not justified by the letter of his orders in pursuing the course which he did—and Mr. Laughton certainly seems to show that this was so—the arrangement of his force was such as to lead him to interpret the spirit of his orders in the way that he did. If Burchett is correctly informed, the same idea seems to have possessed Medina-Sidonia up to the moment of his final defeat at sea—namely, that it was a possibility in naval strategy to proceed with a territorial attack over sea in presence of a hostile fleet.

This was the primary error of the King of Spain; and the great advantage of bringing the defeat of Medina-Sidonia and of Persano together is that the parallelism of the cases so emphatically confirms the rule of strategy. Medina-Sidonia in 1588 fails to land a man, except as a fugitive, on the territory selected for descent, just as Persano does in 1866; and both suffer the overwhelming defeat of their fleets.

It should not have been possible for the King of Spain to regard the English fleet as insignificant after the transactions at Cadiz in the year before. Had it been ever so insignificant, it was necessary

* Burchett, p. 353.

to paralyse its action in some way before any descent on the territory it guarded could be attempted. Just in the same way, the Italian Government, or Persano for them, might have been justified in despising the Austrian force at Pola; but, however little its strength might have been esteemed, it was an absolute necessity to paralyse its action if the capture of the island of Lissa was to be accomplished. If neither Medina-Sidonia nor Persano had naval force enough for the double operation of paralysing the defending naval force, and covering the landing at the same time, and yet attempted to pursue the descent, they each courted the fate they met, and fully deserved it.

In all cases of descent liable to be even watched by hostile fleets, we shall meet failure unless the descending forces are divided into two perfectly distinct parts; one to paralyse the possibly interfering naval force, and the other to conduct the descent itself. But Philip had a heavier task before him than Persano, inasmuch as there were three distinct opposing fleets which must be paralysed, and one of them, as lying between the two wings of the descending force, which must be defeated. There was, as we have seen, Lord Howard's fleet at Plymouth, Lord Henry Seymour's in the "narrow seas," by the Straits of Dover, and Count Justin's, blockading Dunkirk and Nieuport. Had Philip ever looked this matter in the face? Had he in any way prepared his naval forces for division into the necessary four parts, each of sufficient strength—one to mask Lord Howard, one to mask Lord Henry Seymour, a third to defeat and then to mask Count Justin of Nassau, and a fourth to conduct and cover the landing? There is no sign anywhere that ideas so obviously pressing found a place in his mind; and if Medina-Sidonia in any way represented the mind of his master, there must have been a firm belief that in some way or other the descent could proceed to success in the very face of three opposing fleets.

Persano had but the one fleet to paralyse, but he must have been possessed with the same idea as Medina-Sidonia, that in some way or other the appearance of the Austrian fleet would not interfere with the regular conduct of the descent about to be undertaken on the island of Lissa, nor in any way hinder its ultimate success. But that an Admiral was found to act on such an idea, belief of its entrance into an Admiral's mind would be well-nigh impossible.

The failure, then, of the descent upon England in 1588, and upon Lissa in 1866, as well as the collapse of Napoleon's accomplished descent upon Egypt, can all be set down to the one cause—

defiance of plain rules of naval strategy. If there was naval force enough to do it, division should have been made so as to employ one part in paralysing possibly opponent fleets, and the other in covering the descent. If there was not naval force enough for this division, the expeditions ought never to have started, for, short of miracle, they were bound to fail, as all such must fail when conducted over a doubtfully commanded sea. I have adverted in my fourth chapter to the commencement of these descents and counter descents on outlying territories, which were begun by Sir Robert Holms against the Dutch possessions on the coasts of Africa and America, and followed up on the other side by De Ruiter. I have also noticed the beginnings of those transfers and re-transfers of the West India Islands in 1666–67, which afterwards became so common between naval belligerents. I need not further advert to these remote events, as more recent examples of the same things are so numerous and so much more capable of treatment from the philosophical standpoint.

But a few words as to certain expeditions to Ireland in James II.'s interest in 1689–90 and 1691 may be useful, as they form examples of the class of descents which I have spoken of in the previous chapter as not involving the element of time, and depending for their success on the reception which is given to them in the country itself. In such expeditions the navy is not concerned, except as convoy. There is no landing to be covered, nor footing to be made good and held. It is therefore legitimate to proceed by the method of evasion, though it is more consistent with promise of success that a possibly intercepting naval force should be watched and masked, or at least occupied, and that only a small convoying force should be directly employed in protecting the transports.

In 1689 the English naval forces were disorganized, and beside the practical inefficiency of the ships for obtaining and keeping any adequate command of the sea, the necessary preparations were all in arrear, so that Admiral Herbert never had any hopes of interfering, nor ever made any attempt to interfere with the landing of James, which took place at Kinsale on the 12th March. When Herbert received the news, he was only in course of getting his fleet together, and all his hopes only extended to a possible interception of the French convoy on its return. Even when he sailed for the westward, it was with but a portion of his fleet, and in the expectation that the rest of it might join him.

Here, then, we have a clear case of landing on a friendly coast,

in which the naval work was done when the military forces were landed; and where therefore the question of the command of the sea did not arise, except during the passage over. But even here, the necessity for recruitment and supply followed.*

Herbert arrived off Cork on the 17th April, and learning there that further supplies were expected from Brest, he cruised down in that direction, and then in the Soundings, in hopes that fortune might favour him with a sight of the French convoy in crossing. In more modern times, with ships that it was safe to trust close off an enemy's port, Herbert would certainly have at once invested Brest by sea, and prevented any extensive sailings therefrom, as Cornwallis afterwards was able to do in 1805. But Herbert's ships were not of a character to be trusted in the way Cornwallis trusted his. As a consequence of this inability, 24 sail of the line, 2 frigates, and 6 fire-ships with 6,000 troops on board, all under the command of Lieut.-General Châteaurenault sailed from Brest on the 26th April (6th May), and reached the coast of Ireland unseen by Herbert, anchoring in Bantry Bay, on the 29th April (9th May).†

Herbert, disappointed at seeing nothing of the enemy, returned to Ireland, and saw the French, counting with the transports 44 sail, off Kinsale, apparently in fact, at the moment of their arrival. He lost sight of them on their entry into Bantry, and was misled by a report of their entry into Baltimore.

The French having anchored, proceeded at once with the landing of the troops. This was nearly completed, when about 4 o'clock in the afternoon (30th April or 1st May) the French counted 22 English line-of-battle ships and 6 small vessels approaching against the easterly wind, which blew down the bay.‡ Safe in his position, the French admiral went on with the disembarkation, but next morning got under sail and brought Herbert to action. The battle was indecisive. The English were in decided inferiority of strength, but yet not so weak as to offer any good prospect of complete defeat. The French admiral had landed his troops and fulfilled his mission; there was no par-

* I do not gather what number of men landed with James at Kinsale. He was conducted over by Commodore Gabaret, who left Captain Duquesne Mosnier with 3 frigates at James' disposition.—Troude, vol. i., p. 190.

† Troude, vol. i., p. 190. The dates given do not accurately correspond with the English ones, nautical and civil time very likely conflicting.

‡ Historians do not agree as to Herbert's numbers. Entick gives only 18.

ticular advantage to be gained by following up the English. Herbert, on his part, could not hope for decisive success against the French, and nothing could now undo the work of the landing. He made for his rendezvous, thirty miles west of Scilly, in hopes of meeting reinforcements, but failing in this he returned to Spithead, leaving the sea behind him free for the operations of the French.

We may observe of these transactions that the lessons they convey are not very important. The French successes began because the English were wanting in the naval force which was necessary to prevent them. They continued because the landings were on a practically friendly shore, as if, indeed, there had been a transfer of troops from one port in France to another; and because marine architecture was not sufficiently advanced to make the cutting of communications more than an operation of the most uncertain character; and, lastly, because the French were in such superior force as really to defy the attacks of the English. Under such conditions, the arguments put forward in the last chapter almost guaranteed the French success.

Like arguments fully account for the French successful landing in the Shannon in 1691; and the ineffectiveness of the blockade, or watching of the French naval forces by way of cutting communications, is shown by the station taken up by the English fleet for watching Brest. It was no nearer than 24 miles west of Ushant, and this, although it must have been remembered that in 1689 de Tourville, favoured by the wind, had taken a very inferior French fleet into Brest in full view of the greatly superior but still powerless English fleet, powerless because it was unsafe to maintain a position closer to the entrance of the port.*

I pass now to that prolific field for examples of the kind required, the West Indies.

King William "sent frequent orders and directions to the governors of the several plantations in America to annoy the French in those parts to the utmost of their power. And that they might be the better able to do this, and be at the same time secured from any insults from the French side, he had frequently sent them small squadrons of men-of-war, to be always ready, and at their direction, on such occasions as they should find necessary to employ them in. . . . The French, however, were so numerous in their colonies, and by the riches of their plantations

* Entick, p. 554. Troude, vol i., p. 195.

PLATE I.

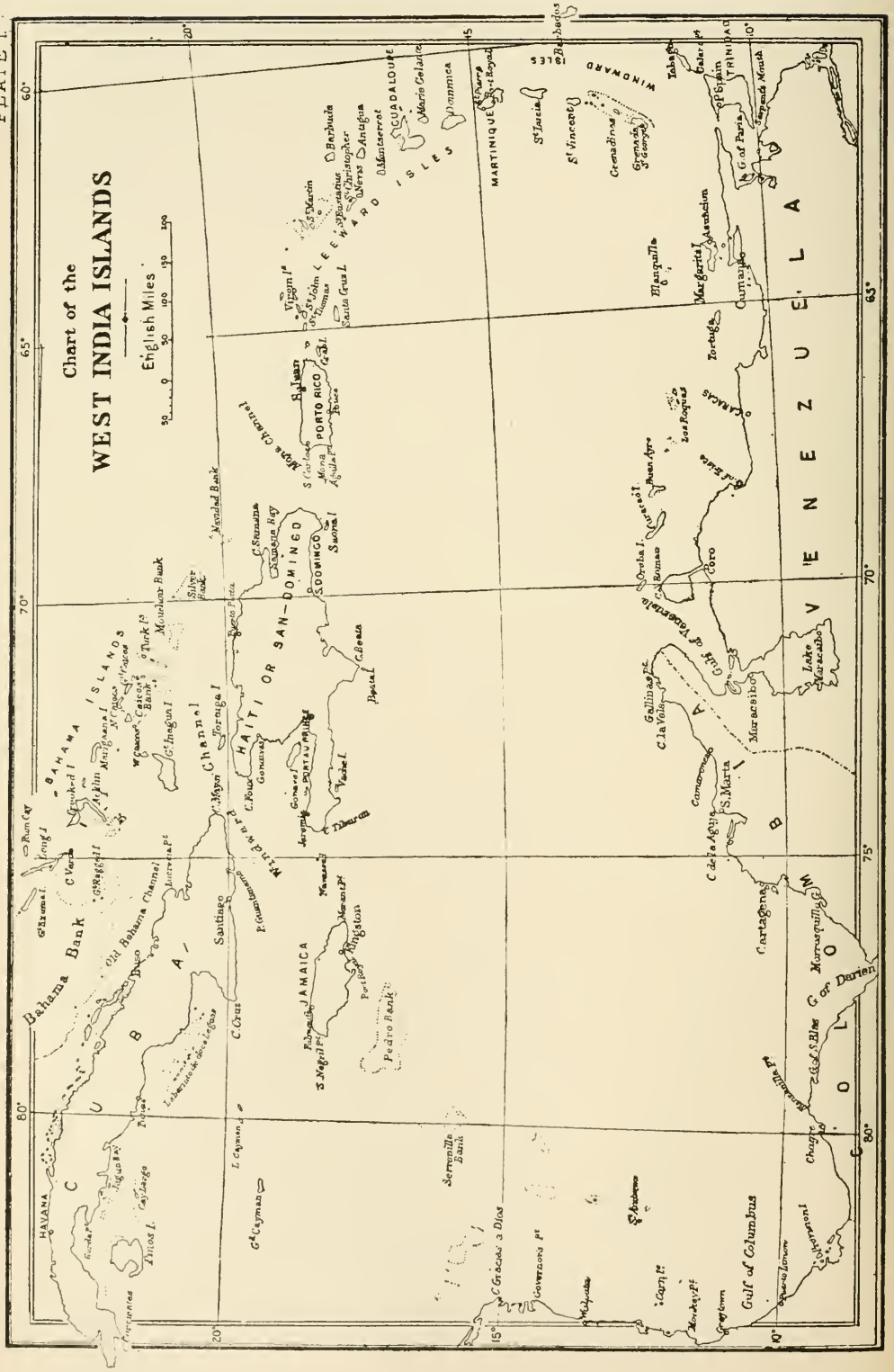


Chart of the
WEST INDIA ISLANDS
English Miles
50 0 50 100 150 200
BAHAMA ISLANDS
Bahama Bank
Old Bahama Channel
CUBA
HAVANA
Matanzas
Cayo Largo
Nicholas I.
Cayo Romano
Cayo Sabinal
Cayo Guajaba
Cayo Guajaba del Fuera
Cayo Cruz del Padre
Cayo Coco

were so able to fit out privateers to infest the western islands, that a small force was not only insufficient to disturb them, but also unable to protect the English settlements." *

As a consequence of these conditions, Captain Wright was placed, towards the close of 1689, in command of a squadron, strong for those days, and consisting of 1 third-rate, 7 fourth, and 2 fifth-rates, with 2 fire-ships and a ketch. He was to assemble his ships at Plymouth, there to embark a regiment of foot, and then to sail for Barbados. His orders were to consult with the Governor of Barbados as to securing the English plantations, and recovering such as might have fallen into the hands of the French, but not to remain longer there than was necessary to refresh his people, and to take troops on board. He was then to make for such of the Leeward Islands as, from intelligence of the enemy's proceedings, might most promise success. At the Leeward Islands he was to apply himself to General Codrington, and in all things relating to the land service to act according to his directions and the opinion of a council of war, either for landing the regiment or attacking the French colonies, recovering any of our islands, or annoying the enemy in any other manner. In enterprises at sea he was to act as should be advised by the Governor and Councils of War, when he had opportunity of consulting them, and, when it was necessary, to spare as many seamen as he could with regard to the safety of the ships; and that the islands might not be exposed to insults, he was forbid to send any ship from the squadron until the Governor and Council were informed of it, and satisfied that the service did not require their immediate attendance.†

Wright sailed from Plymouth on March 8th, 1690, with a large convoy; but before he arrived at Madeira, 5 of his war-ships and some part of his convoy was missing. He was happy, however, in finding them all at Madeira, and in reaching Carlisle Bay, in Barbados, on the 11th May without casualty, but with his men, after the too common fashion of those days, greatly reduced by weakness and sickness. However, being landed and cared for on shore, they speedily recovered and enabled him to put to sea on the 27th. On the 30th he arrived at Antigua, and being sworn a member of the Council presided over by General Codrington, proceeded to consult over future proceedings.

It appears as if nothing was settled by the Council, but that the General and the Commodore themselves agreed on the outline of a

* Entick, p. 577. † *Ibid.*

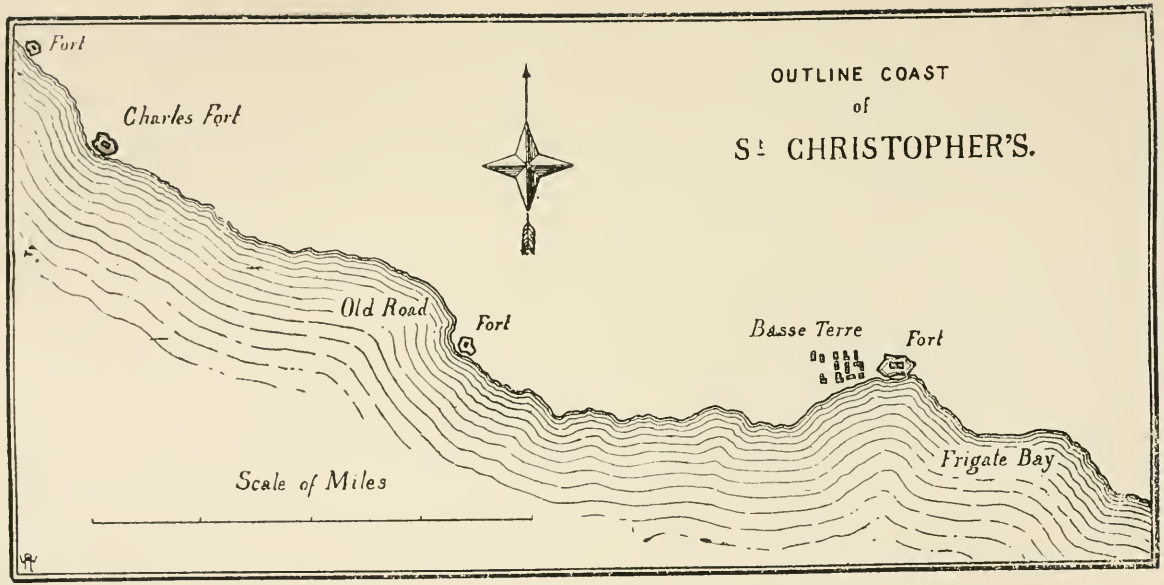
programme, in accordance with which the Commodore sailed on June 3rd to Monserrat, where he was joined by the General with additional troops, and together they sailed to Nevis. Here, on the 17th of June, they came to a determination to recover St. Christophers from the French. The condition of this island had been that of a joint possession between English and French settlers. On the occurrence of the war the French settlers had been able to overpower the English, and now held the island.

The first operations in the attack were that Sir Timothy Thornhill, with about 500 men, landed eastwards of "Frigate Bay." He was opposed by the French, but twice defeated them and marched towards Basse Terre, again defeating the enemy who designed to bar his progress. The General then landed with 3,000 men and marched upon Basse Terre, while the fleet prepared to co-operate by bombarding the town and forts. The fleet's interference was not, however, necessary, for the enemy quitted their works and fled to the mountains. The army, continuing their march, burnt all before them, and finally encamped about a mile from the town. Fort Charles, however, was still held by the enemy. The fleet moved to the Old Road and anchored, awaiting the arrival of the army. On the 30th two guns were mounted in battery to play on the fort, while the fleet assisted by bombarding it from the sea, keeping under sail. On the 2nd of July the fort still held out, and nine 12-pounders were landed and placed in battery. This brought about the fall of the fort; a flag of truce offering to surrender on terms came out on the 12th, and on the 13th the place was given up.

On the 17th it was determined to attack St. Eustatia, and Sir T. Thornhill was landed there with his regiment without opposition, and the same evening the fleet anchored there. The citadel fort, however, though garrisoned by only eighty men, held out until the 24th. It was the only citadel in the island, and when it fell the conquest was complete.

After finishing these two conquests the fleet returned to Fort Charles in St. Christophers to re-embark its guns and stores that had been landed. Then a council of war decided that, owing to the sickliness of the army, and the near approach of the hurricane season, nothing more could then be undertaken. The troops not left in garrison in the conquered islands, were relanded at Antigua, and the fleet returned to Barbados.

These commencements of a long series of captures and recaptures of islands in the West India group, are no doubt of a minor


Fort
Charles Fort
OUTLINE COAST
of
S.t CHRISTOPHER'S.
Old Road
Fort
Basse Terre
Fort
Frigate Bay
Scale of Miles

character; but I have already observed that principles are sometimes much more apparent in war when the surroundings are simple, than when a vast *entourage* distracts the attention.

In these two small conquests we have all the elements of success and none of those of failure. There is, first, a fully commanded sea, for there is nowhere any hint of even a small French naval force. There is agreement between the admiral and the general. There is sufficient military force. The work of placing the army in a position to operate is done by the navy, which supplies and recruits it. The army is the attacking force, and where the navy is brought in, it is merely as an assistant to the main attack. Its powers are measured against Fort Charles, and it is found that eleven light guns mounted on shore, in the hands of the army, but under the guarantee of a sea commanded by the navy, are found of more account than all the broadsides of the fleet.

CHAPTER XII.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea Succeed or Fail.—(*Continued.*)

Capture of Marie-Galante in March 1691.—Landing at Guadaloupe.—Siege of the forts at Basse Terre abandoned hastily in consequence of neighbourhood of French squadron.—Contemporary errors as to Commodore Wright's strategic position.—Successful attacks upon Nova Scotia from New England across an indifferent sea.—Failure of attack on Quebec from delay and insufficient force.—Impossibility of territorial attacks over a doubtfully commanded sea, illustrated by the operations of Commodore Wren and Count de Blanac in the West Indies in 1692.—Failure of the attack on Martinique in 1693 and its causes—Successes on West Coast of Africa and their causes.—Remarkable paradox as to Goree.—Failure of attack on Brest and its causes.—Russell's operations in the Mediterranean in 1694-95.—The mere rumour of a French fleet forces abandonment of siege of Palamos.—Wilmot's operations in St. Domingo in 1695.—Success in spite of adverse conditions.—Various attacks on French Coast in 1694-95-96.—Reflections.

The hurricane season being over, Commodore Wright returned with his squadron to Antigua, with the view of arranging with General Codrington for some further offensive operations against the enemy. The naval and military commanders met at St. Christopher's, and it was decided, in a Council of War, to make an attempt to carry Guadaloupe. But this conclusion had no sooner been arrived at than the Commodore received orders to sail for England with part of his squadron. Before this could be done, it was requisite to return to Barbados to obtain necessary provisions and stores which were expected there from England; but, in any case, the attack on Guadaloupe must be abandoned. Wright accordingly sailed from St. Christopher's on the 15th December 1690, and arrived at Carlisle Bay, Barbados, on the 30th.

Here he began to disperse his squadron, presumably according to orders; two ships to Jamaica, to be stationed there, and another

to convoy the trade thence homewards. It was necessary to detach a fourth to collect the trade from Barbados and the Leeward Islands, and these detachments left the Commodore with but seven ships, and these in many ways defective.

Not many days had the Commodore lain at Barbados when counter-orders reached him from home, and on the 20th January 1691 the *Jersey*, 48, arrived, convoying the desired victuallers and store ships. This reversal of his orders naturally reproduced the designs for offensive operations, and especially the idea of an attack on Guadaloupe. In preparation for this, the Commodore took up six merchant-men, and converted them into men-of-war.* With a fleet thus made up to 14 sail, Wright sailed, on 12th February, for the Leeward Islands to concert measures with General Codrington. Some disagreements arising between the commanders led to delays, but in the end it was determined to proceed against Guadaloupe, and to make capture of its dependency, the island of Marie-Galante, as a preliminary.†

The expedition started on the 21st March, and on the 28th 900 men being landed under Colonel Nott possessed themselves without opposition of the town and fort, the authorities retiring into the country, but soon surrendering themselves as prisoners.

At this point it is convenient to note that we have had to do with a chain of successes, the capture of St. Christopher's, St. Eustasia, and Marie-Galante, where in each case the landings were effected without opposition, away from the cover of the forts, which all fell to the land attack either at once or after resistance for a certain time. The conditions of success were a sufficient military force, covered, or ready to be covered, in its landing by a naval force, and assisted where it was possible by the fire of the fleet in its subsequent operations. There was agreement between the commanders by land and by sea, and the latter was absolutely unthreatened by the interference of any other sea force.

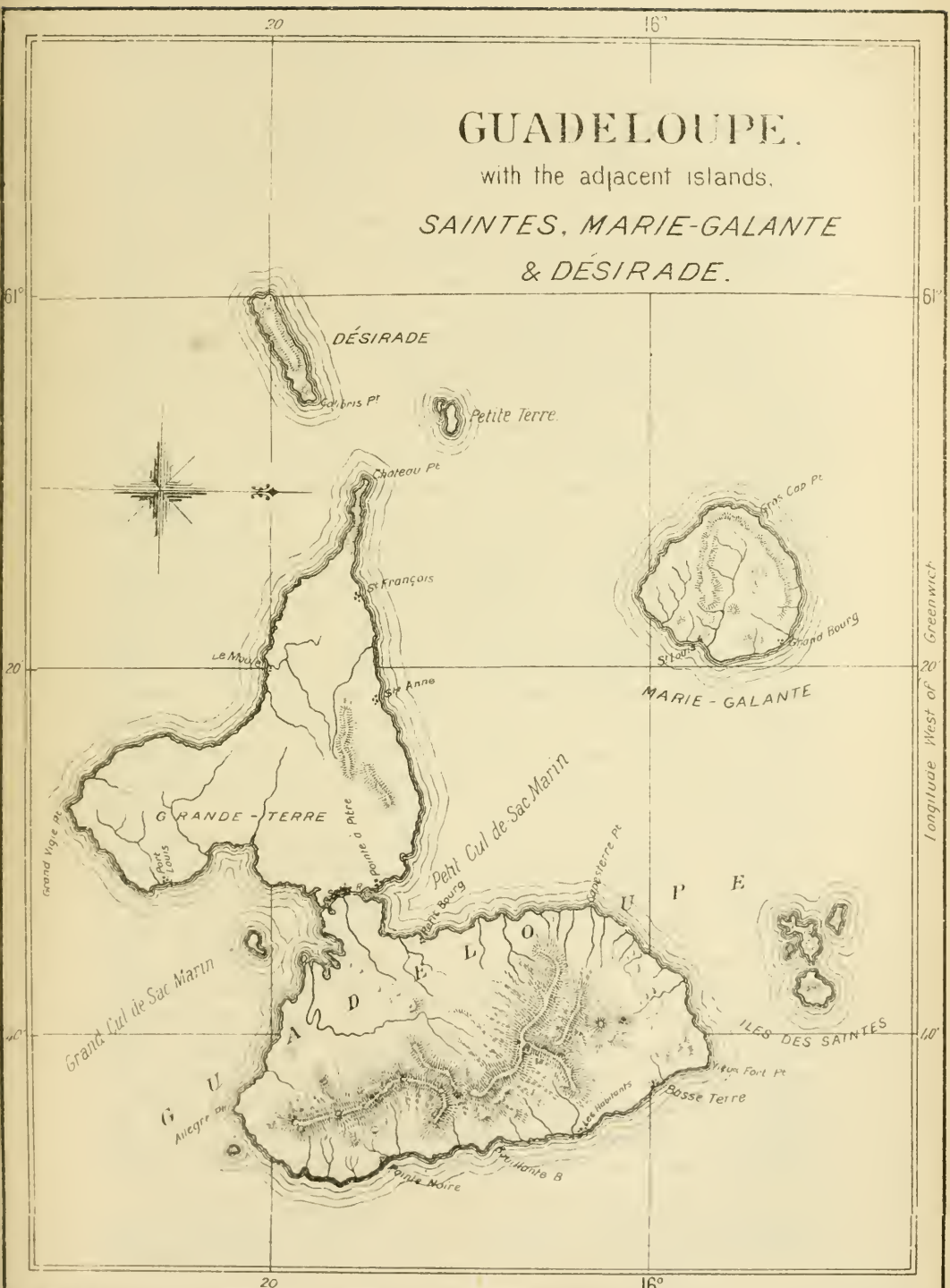
Apparently there was no special design of holding Marie-Galante, for we read of our men having, while awaiting the arrival of General Codrington with the rest of the troops, "ruined the plantations and ravaged the country of Marie-Galante"; but on the General's making his appearance, it was determined to proceed against Guadaloupe. The troops landed at Marie-Galante, being re-

* One of 40 guns, two of 32, and three of 30 guns each. Lediard, vol. ii., p. 646.

† Burchett (p. 456) says that, allowing 350 men for the garrison of the new conquest, St. Christopher's, the available army was not more than 1,500 men, collected from Nevis, Monserrat, and Antigua.

embarked, the whole army was landed in a bay on the west side of the island, probably near Capesterre, on the 21st April, and marched round the south part of the island towards Basse Terre. The French met them on their route, but were defeated and driven back after a sharp action. The British continued their march to Basse Terre, where they arrived on the 23rd, and burnt the town. "But there were two strong forts in the neighbourhood thereof which would require some time to reduce."* The fleet had followed up the troops in their march, no doubt covering and supporting them as they skirted the shore, and the ships now anchored off Basse Terre, landing ammunition and equipment for the intended siege of the forts. But it was determined to try the effect of the fire of the ships upon them in the first instance. Wind and current operated unfavourably, however, and the ships were set nine miles and more to leeward—that is, to the northward of their intended battering position. Two batteries were now erected on shore, supplied with guns and a mortar from the ships, and the siege proceeded, after the example of that of Fort Charles. But some disquieting news arrived while this business was being conducted. The Commodore learnt that M. du Casse had arrived in the West Indies with a squadron from France, and that consequently his operations were at any moment liable to be interrupted —that, in fact, he was no longer in assured command of the sea. The operations were not, however, at once interrupted; but when, on the 14th May, one of the Commodore's look-out ships came in and reported 11 sail of French ships, supposed to be coming from Martinique for the relief of Guadaloupe, the commander by land agreed with the commander by sea that the entire design must be instantly abandoned. The same night the whole of the troops were re-embarked, and so hurriedly that the mortar and all the siege appliances were left behind on shore. Next morning the squadron sailed for the eastward, against the trade wind and in blowing weather. In two days they saw the French squadron to windward, and it was supposed, from their situation, that the ships had landed a reinforcement at Guadaloupe. Wright gave chase to a portion of the French squadron, which, however, declined to be met, and the next day the whole British force anchored under Marie-Galante. There, taking the presence of the French squadron into consideration (it is said), with the sudden outbreak of illness among the soldiers and sailors, it was determined to disperse the expedition.†

* Burchett, p. 458 † *Ibid.*



BRETTELL, 21, BURNET ST LONDON, W

To Face Page 264.

Codrington went back to Antigua with some of the troops and men-of-war, while Wright, with the rest, made for Barbados.

This is the first clear instance we have of the abandonment of an attack on territory as the direct consequence of threatened interruption from the sea. That the attack could not go on when the immediate vicinity of a relieving naval force was assumed, may in this case seem obvious enough. It was not even necessary to this end that the two squadrons should meet, for the whole chance of success rested on the superiority in the field of the British force landed. The moment this scale was turned, the British troops must either have re-embarked or surrendered, and it was only reasonable to suppose that the French squadron reported would begin its operations by landing troops on the east side of the island sufficient to turn the scale against the British as soon as they marched across, just as the British had done, and as, indeed, the colleague commanders believed the French had done when they saw him. Whatever way we look at it, we can see that it was impossible to go on with the attack. Supposing the British squadron to have been powerful enough to have met the French on an equality, could it have sailed away to do so, leaving the troops without a base either of supply or support, and with the doubt whether they might not at any moment find themselves between the old garrison in the forts and the new reinforcements just landed? Could the attack have gone on, when at any moment a strong hostile fleet might advance on the British squadron simultaneously with a strong body of troops by land upon the besiegers? But it is remarkable that neither the contemporary witnesses—not being sea officers—nor the subsequent historians, appear to have understood the Commodore's position. Everyone turns upon him as having done something cowardly and despicable, some placing the appearance of the French squadron only on a level with the appearance of sickness amongst the men, and evidently supposing that the one might have been got over as easily as the other. Commodore Wright having gone home sick from Barbados, all the historians cut at him as if the sickness was feigned to avoid deserved disgrace, and one of them declaring that, "for his negligence and cowardice, he was sent home a prisoner."* Two letters from contemporary members of the Barbados Council, Colonel Farmer and Mr. Reid, are given by Entick,

* *British Empire in America*, vol. ii., p. 54, quoted by Lediard, vol. ii., p. 647. The case illustrates the impossibility of the naval commander shaking off his responsibility for territorial failures.

which illustrate the sort of uninstructed views which can be taken of the operations of the naval commander. We must recollect that the man written of had enabled the troops to capture the islands of St. Christopher's, Monserrat, and Marie-Galante without a hitch, and in agreeing to abandon the attack on Guadaloupe was only doing what all subsequent commanders found themselves obliged to do.

Colonel Farmer says :—

Captain Wright, with all the King's ships, reinforced with 6 of our best merchantmen, equal to 4th and 5th rates, well manned, has been this seven weeks down there (at the Leeward Islands); and though great matters were talked of here before he went, as of taking and destroying all the French islands in a short time; yet talking is all that has hitherto been done, except the taking a small fisher-boat. But the French have been more active; for while these mighty things were performing by our fleets, in the roads and bays of St. Christopher's, Antigua and Mevis, they, with sloops and other small vessels, are busied in taking (both windward and leeward of this island) our vessels inward and outward bound, of which we have advice of 13 of all sorts already taken by them; so that in a very short time we shall be in a miserable condition for want of provisions.

Mr. Reid writes :—

Our crops this year have been very small; in all probability the next will be smaller, we not having had the usual seasons to plant. We have been annoyed extremely by a little French snow, who has, notwithstanding the King's fleet, taken, by report, 28 or 30 of our small vessels to leeward of this island, which has occasioned provisions to be scarce and dear. Our admiral, of whom we are like to be happily rid, has been slothful in their Majesties service; he and General Codrington deserted Guadaloupe without any reason, only their own jealousies and fears of the French fleet, when we had three times the number of men that the French had. They left their mortar piece behind, though the French at the same time deserted the island also,* concluding we were going to attack Martinico. This expedition is one of the most unaccountable things I ever heard of.

Neither of these writers at all understands that the whole matter was the appearance of the French squadron having changed the strategic conditions; that while, in the absence of a French squadron, a sufficient military force landed under cover of ships, and properly handled afterwards, was certain to effect its object, the very gravest uncertainty and risk surrounded the whole operation in the presence of a French squadron. The letters are also useful as showing the difference between a commanded sea, as regards territorial attacks, and as regards commerce protection—the certainty of the one, and the uncertainty of the other, unless the ports whence commerce destroyers may issue can be sealed up by blockade. These writers were clearly of opinion that there was no difference between these strategical conditions, and were quite un-

* I have met no corroboration of this statement, which is not very consequent.

aware that the forces proper for gaining command of the sea might be quite useless for protecting commerce.

Two instances of expeditions conducted over an indifferent sea drawn from the coasts of North America, and as occurring in 1691, follow here in natural order. The one was a success and the other a failure, but the sea being indifferent neither depended on naval defence.

At this time the French, to the number of 6,000 or 7,000, were in possession of Nova Scotia, or, as it was then called, Acadia, and on the outbreak of war occupied themselves in raiding upon the English settlements on the New England coast, chiefly those about Casco Bay and Wells. The strong place of Acadia was Port Royal, now Annapolis, on the north-west coast, and against this the Government of New England determined to send an expedition. Seven hundred men were despatched from Nantasket Bay near Boston, under the command of Sir William Phipps, and the force being sufficient, Port Royal surrendered after a few days' resistance. On his return voyage Sir William Phipps conducted some further raiding, as at St. John's River Settlement, west of Port Royal, on the Acadian coast.

An attack was now prepared on a larger scale against Quebec. Thirty sail, carrying 2,000 troops, left Hull, near Boston, on August 6th, 1691, under Sir William Phipps, bound for the St. Lawrence. It was intended that this attack from the sea was to be supplemented by one of 1,000 Englishmen and 1,500 Indians marching overland upon Mount-Royal (Montreal), but this branch of the operations falling through, left the Count de Frontenac with the full strength of his garrison to oppose Sir William Phipps. Foul winds greatly delayed the progress of the expedition over sea, and three weeks were occupied in ascending the St. Lawrence. It was not till the 8th of October, in the most bitter weather, that Lieut.-General Whalley was landed for an assault on Quebec with but the 1,400 men which sickness had left available. The intention was, that the ships with their guns should support on the west side the assault of the troops upon the east side of the City. Sir William Phipps waited in vain, however, for the movement of the troops, and sending on shore for explanations, found them paralyzed with the cold, and with the information that De Frontenac had 4,000 men with him. There was nothing for it but to re-embark the troops and abandon the enterprise, which was accordingly done. Some doubts seem to hang over the extent to which both troops and ships were actually engaged, but none sur-

round the fact of the failure. Its causes are plain enough. The expedition started too late in the season, and was not in sufficient force to begin with, being further wasted by the sickness which, at least in those remote days, was always the concomitant of combined operations. The historian in his recital recognizes the business character of war, by reducing the English loss to a money standard, and sighingly concluding with the observation that "thus ended this fruitless expedition, which cost the colony of New England forty thousand pounds."*

In October 1691 Commodore Wren, in the *Norwich*, a fourth-rate of 48 guns, was ordered to take under his command two other fourth-rates, transports containing reinforcements for the troops in the West Indies, victuallers, and a merchant convoy. He was to proceed to Barbados and assume the command of the single third-rate, the *Mary*, of probably 70 guns, with four other fourth-rates, and a fire-ship. He was to detach one of these eight fighting ships to carry out convoy duty from Jamaica, and to employ the remaining seven sail in securing the British territories and annoying the enemy until the spring of the year, when he was to bring the ships home.

On his arrival at Barbados on the 16th January 1692, he was instantly warned that nine French war-ships were in the vicinity of the island; that they had captured one of his fourth-rates, the *Jersey*, and that only the *Mary* and *Antelope* and the fire-ship could immediately join him, the remaining two ships being at the Leeward Islands.

We have here a clear example of the doubtfully commanded sea, and may note what the consequences were. We hear nothing on either side of territorial attacks. The first proposal was that the Commodore should proceed with his ships to Antigua so as to concentrate his forces; but before this step was taken news arrived that the French had actually 18 sail in the West Indies, 8 of them cruising off Barbados, and the rest either fitted or fitting at Martinique. There was no hope then but to take advantage of the enemy's divided state, and two merchant ships fitted as war-ships, with two privateers, being added to the Commodore's five ships, the squadron of 9 sailed on the 30th January with the intention of bringing the 8 or 9 French men-of-war to action.

The enemy had, however, proceeded to the north in the meantime, so the Commodore returned to Barbados without getting sight of them. The French being thus concentrated, there was necessity

* Lediard, vol. ii., p. 648.

for a like concentration on the part of the British, and accordingly the squadron sailed for Antigua on the 17th February, detaching small look-out vessels to Martinique for intelligence.

On arrival near the island of Desirada, close to Guadaloupe, Wren came in sight of 18 sail of French fighting ships, with 2 fire-ships and 5 or 6 small vessels. This was the squadron of Count de Blanac, and he had with him three prizes taken from the British, namely, the *Jersey*, 48, already mentioned, the *Constant Warwick*, probably 48, and the *Mary Rose*. The Commodore's squadron was much scattered at this moment, and was, besides, hampered by the care of a merchant convoy. But by the exercise of great prudence and skill, Wren managed to avoid anything but a partial action with the French, and though he was obliged entirely to give up the design of concentrating his whole force in the West Indies, he managed to return to Carlisle Bay, Barbados, without the loss of one ship, on the 25th February.

Though the French were thus in clear superiority of force at sea, they do not appear to have considered themselves strong enough in presence of Wren's squadron to undertake any territorial expeditions of moment, but Commodore Wren dying, Captain Boteler succeeded to the command, and, in compliance with the orders under which his predecessor acted, he detached certain ships for the local guard of the different ports in the islands, and sailed with the rest for England on the 14th June 1692, thus leaving the French practically in undisputed command of the West Indian seas.*

Not impossibly the great perils to which our West Indian possessions were left open by this withdrawal of the English squadron was quite understood by the Government, but the battle of La Hogue not having then given the quietus to French designs of command in the Channel, there was a natural desire to be strong at home. But, though the French do not appear to have taken full advantage of their command of the sea to carry any important British possession, trade suffered so much from the superiority of the enemy, that a determined effort was set on foot to suppress him. For this purpose a squadron was fitted out in the month of November 1692 under the command of Rear-Admiral of the Blue Sir Francis Wheeler, who had already distinguished himself in command of the *Albemarle* at the battle of Beachy Head. This squadron consisted of 11 ships of and above the fifth rate, with three fire-ships and store-ships, hospital and transport ships;

* Burchett, p. 460.

1,500 men were embarked under the command of Colonel Fowlkes.

There was some new ground broken in the orders under which this squadron acted, inasmuch as it left England with the definite purpose of attacking the French island of Martinique; and, on its arrival at Barbados, orders were sent to General Codrington at the Leeward Islands, to prepare the troops under his command for co-operation, while arrangements were made for landing a battalion of seamen from the fleet, of which the Admiral was to be himself in command. None of the historians I have been able to consult, give any account of the French naval force in the West Indies, nor is there mention of any such in the subsequent operations. I think the facts may be explained by what I have said as to the strategical effect of the hurricane season in the West Indies. Wren's orders, when he left England in the winter of 1692, were to return in the spring, and the approach of the hurricane season may have determined this return in conjunction with the cause suggested above. The same cause would naturally have operated as to the return of the French, and the disaster of La Hogue might well have disinclined them from making any immediate exertions to take the command in the West Indian seas again when the season opened. At any rate, Sir Francis Wheeler's instructions, as summarized by the historians, give no hint of any probable opposition by sea.

Wheeler reached Barbados on March 1st, 1693, and beside the regiments of Fowlkes and Godwin which he already had with him, he embarked about 800 men from Barbados, and proceeded direct to Martinique, reaching Cul de sac Marin, near the south end of the island, on April 1st. Here there was some delay, waiting for the arrival of Codrington with the troops collected from the Leeward Islands; but the time seems to have been employed in landing considerable parties to burn and destroy both west and east of the anchorage. On the 9th and 10th of April, either before or after the arrival of General Codrington, but I think it must have been immediately after, the usual council of war, composed of the land and sea officers was called, and divergencies of opinion seem to have at once made themselves apparent. There seem to have been differences of view as to whether the conquest of Martinique was to be attempted, or whether the expedition was to confine its operations to a series of landings and ravagings, such as had already been entered on in the neighbourhood of Cul de sac Marin; and then the discussion turned on

whether Fort Royal, the capital of the island, and the great port, on the southern part of the west shore, or St. Pierre, a place of secondary importance on the northern part of the same shore, was to be first attacked. It was decided that St. Pierre was to be attempted, and by the 20th the troops had been landed there and had committed some ravages. But then came the crucial question, debated in another council of war, whether the town and fort were to be besieged, or whether the troops were to be re-embarked for some further ravaging operations in other parts. The Admiral and a Colonel Colt were alone for persevering against St. Pierre, but the majority were against them, holding that there was not force enough; that the troops were not to be depended on; and that as of the 3,000 men landed, some 800 were either killed, wounded, or missing, within three days, it was hopeless to think of going on.*

In accordance with the decision, the men were re-embarked, but very naturally there was no heart for another landing, and it was determined to retire to Dominica to water the fleet and refresh the crews and troops. At Dominica, another council was held, still less inclined for action. A proposal to attack Guadaloupe was rejected, and it was decided to break up the whole expedition. Lediard † gives the following account of the debate.

> The great charge the Crown had been at on this expedition being considered by Sir Francis, he was of opinion that Guadaloupe ought to be immediately attacked, and General Codrington, as well as Colonel Fowlkes, were of the same mind, provided the squadron and army could remain there six weeks or two months; for in less than that time it was believed it could not be effected, because the enemy was here as strong, or rather stronger, than at St. Peter's. But Sir Francis informed them that the King had positively ordered that the fleet should not continue in those parts longer than the last of May; and the forces belonging to Barbados being very urgent to be gone, he having refreshed the officers and men, bent his course to New England, and arrived at Boston the 12th of June.

This is the failure of a territorial attack over a commanded sea.‡ The land defences of Martinique did not prevent the attack being made, and we cannot say whether or no it might have succeeded had there been no delays, or differences of opinion in the council of war. It is conceivable that had the conquest of the island been the single aim, Fort Royal, with its excellent harbour,

* Burchett is not altogether consequent in his narration. Lediard and Entick follow him not more consequently; and none of them seem to have referred to a map. I have collated their accounts into a somewhat more consequent form.

† Vol. ii., p. 672.

‡ "During the whole expedition there was not any account received of a squadron of ships of war."—Lediard, vol. ii., p. 672.

CARTE
de l'Isle de
la
MARTINIQUE.
CAPS-TERRE
BASSE-TERRE
la Grande cîtee
Cap Salomon
Pointe des Salines
Pointe du Diamant

might have fallen to a vigorous combined attack. The fleet again takes the second place in the attack, all the operations relied on being committed to the land forces. The failure may be said to have arisen from the double cause of too little force and inefficient handling. None of the immediate failure relates to points of naval strategy, or lies in any way on the naval forces employed; but it may be said that the King's orders, in limiting the time during which command of the sea was to be held, may have prevented a successful attack on Guadaloupe.*

Sir Francis Wheeler, still carrying his troops with him, was naturally anxious, finding himself in command of the sea at New England, to make some conquest which should cover the Martinique failure. He hoped to attempt the French settlement of Placentia in Newfoundland, which was a place where the attack by troops could be supplemented by that of the ships. The council of war was, however, against him, and the only service effected was the landing of a small force to ravage St. Pierre.

Sir Francis did not receive official censure on his return to England in October 1693. He became almost at once Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, but was drowned next year with all but two of his ship's company by the foundering of his flag-ship, the *Sussex*. The public were not so discriminating as the authorities in apportioning the blame for the failure in the West Indies. After his death, Wheeler was called an unfortunate man, suffering from undeserved clamour.†

I pass now to consider in the order of time, but very briefly, some territorial operations on the West Coast of Africa, in 1692–93. The French at the end of 1692 had but two settlements on the West Coast, of which the head-quarters were the island of St. Louis in the Senegal River, and the island of Goree, just south of Cape Verd. South of these settlements were those of the English East African Company in the Gambia, the head-quarters being at James Island.

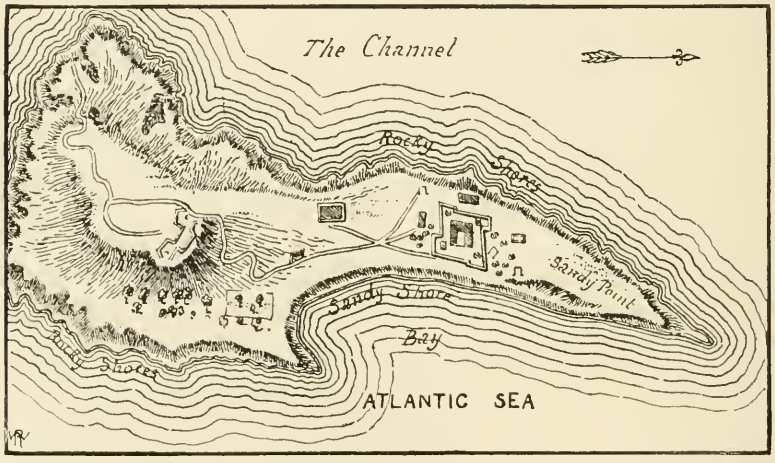
"The Royal African Company of England having of late years been molested in their trade in the north parts of Guinea, by the French, did, by virtue of their Majestys' Commission, order their agent-general, John Booker, Esq., at James Island in the river of

* Campbell, vol. iii., p. 142, lays the chief cause of the failure on the sickness of the troops. He says, the loss by the sword did not exceed 120 men, while during the same period nearly a thousand either absolutely fell victims to disease, or were rendered incapable of service.

† Campbell, vol. iii., p. 145.

Gamboa, to attempt the dispossessing them from those parts; which succeeded accordingly, as appears by letters from the said agent of the 14th March 1692–93, now received by way of Jamaica; an abstract of which follows.

"Having embarked myself, and above a hundred men of this island upon the Company's ships, *Anne*, Captain Leech, and the *America*, Captain Brome, with several sloops as an addition to the force they sent me, I arrived at Senegal river, the 30th of December 1692, with great difficulty, and the loss of six men. I got over the bar, and whilst I was preparing to attack the fort called Louis de Bourbon, the first day of January, I received a letter from M. Desmolins, the Governor, offering to surrender if he and his men might have civil treatment; which I readily granted, landed, and



ISLAND OF GOREE.

took possession of the fort the same day, where I found fifteen cannon, &c. The said fort is situated in the mouth of the river Senegal, and has been in the possession of the French above fifty years, where I have now settled a factory, and called it by the name of William and Mary Fort. I continued there until the twenty-fifth, when I sailed thence, and having succeeded so well, called a council of war at sea the next day, where it was resolved to attack the Island of Goree, the only place remaining in the French possession in Guinea; where I arrived with the ships the first of February, and continued to alarm the castles until Saturday the fourth, when in the night I landed with a hundred men under the old fort, within two hundred and fifty yards of the

new castle called St. Michael,* and commanded by Mr. Felix, situated on a rising ground, and mounted with twenty-eight guns, without any resistance till about break of day, when they fired furiously upon us with great and small shot.

"About noon I sent them a summons to surrender before our cannon should be landed; when they immediately desired a capitulation, which being granted, and articles agreed on, they marched out on the eighth, with their arms, bag and baggage, and colours flying, and were carried to the Company's fort at James Island, whence they are to be transported on the Company's shipping, and at the Company's charge, for Europe."†

These attacks are minor, but still very good instances of the success which attends well-handled descents in sufficient force from a commanded sea. The island of Goree is, in little, an exponent of the great principles. "It produces nothing, and its importance is solely derived from its inaccessible situation, which renders it capable of being converted into an important military position." So speaks the *Edinburgh Gazetteer* of 1822.‡ But what are the facts as to its military position? Originally occupied by the Dutch in 1617, and fortified by the works of St. Michael, it was duly captured in 1663 by Sir Robert Holms in local command of the sea. It was retaken by De Ruiter in the expedition alluded to in my fourth chapter. It was taken again by the French under D'Estrées in 1677. We have now seen it easily taken by the English in 1692–93, and it was soon after retaken from them by the French. They then re-fortified it,§ but it fell again easily to

* Demolished by the English under Sir Robert Holms, but rebuilt by the French.

† *London Gazette*, November 13th, 1693, quoted in *Churchill's Voyages*, vol. v., p. 423. The speed of intelligence in those days is well illustrated by the date of the gazette, nine months after the conclusion of the operations, and by way of Jamaica.

‡ In the same way Brookes' *Gazeteer* speaks of it as "an almost impregnable military position."

§ "Some time after (that is after 1693) the French Company, to prevent any further invasion upon Goeree, caused the upper fort of St. Michael to be rebuilt, fifteen foot high, and furnished it with thirty-two guns, from eighteen to thirty-six pounders, an equal number of each; the latter of which reach a mile beyond the great road of Goeree; whereas an eighteen pounder, fired from aboard a ship in the road, cannot reach it, which nothing under thirty-six pounders will do from thence, as has been experienced by the commander of the island." Barbot, in *Churchill's Voyages*, vol. v., p. 424. The illustration is reduced from Barbot's own in the same volume, and it represents the condition of the island in 1682. The 64-gun ships which took the island in 1800 would not have had heavier guns than 24-pounders, and the two 44-gun ships would only have carried 18-pounders. I find, however, no mention of any attack, and I suppose the mere presence of Sir Charles Hamilton's three ships was sufficient to compel surrender. Had an attack been necessary, it would no doubt have been made by landing parties and guns mounted on shore in the usual way.

Keppel's attack in 1758, and again in 1800 to the attack of Captain Sir Charles Hamilton with one 64 and two 44-gun ships. That is to say this "almost impregnable military position" has been chiefly characterized as being always attacked by, and always falling into the hands of, the Power commanding the adjacent sea. It may no doubt have looked impregnable, as many another frowning fortress has done, and yet it never showed itself to have any military value.

James Island in the Gambia, from whence we have seen the forces issuing over a commanded sea to the capture of St. Louis and Goree, fell in its turn to the French in 1695 as soon as their command of the sea was re-established. M. de Gennes sailed from Rochelle on June 3rd, 1695, with a squadron of 4 frigates and 3 smaller vesssels, furnished with mortars and shells, and fully supplied for a long voyage. He touched at Goree to refresh his men, being on his way to prosecute discoveries and conquests in the south seas. There he learnt that the state of the English garrison at James Island was such from sickness and want that it might be possible to carry the place. He entered the river Gambia on the 22nd July, guided by an English deserter and some negroes. He immediately set about investing the island by water, in order to stop its supplies, while he at the same time converted one of his pinks into a bomb-vessel. On the 23rd the French commander sent an officer to demand the surrender of the place from the English governor. After the polite fashion of those days, the French envoy was hospitably entertained with much drinking of the healths of the hostile sovereigns to the music of salvoes of artillery. At the end of it all, the envoy went back with the Governor's answer that he would defend the fort to the last extremity.

But the investment was complete enough to intercept supplies, and though a couple of ineffective shell were discharged at the fort, it was unnecessary to pursue the attack further, as there was nothing but capitulation before the garrison, and on the 27th of July it was completed.*

This little affair is another example of the axiom that every place depending on the sea for supplies must fall to the Power in command of the sea. And there is no limit to this rule, beyond the obvious one that if the command of the sea changes hands while the investment is in progress, the place is relieved and does not fall.

* Barbot, in Churchill, vol. v., p. 427.

We return again to the West Indies for a moment, for an example of cross-raiding with very small naval, and considerable military force. The English had left West Indian waters almost in an indifferent state, so that M. Du Casse, the French Governor of St. Domingo, conceived the idea of making a conquest of Jamaica. He sailed from St. Domingo in June 1693 with 1,500 troops in 23 transports, convoyed by 3 men-of-war only, and landed at Port Morant, which was abandoned on his approach. He ravaged and plundered at will for some time, advancing probably towards Kingston, but being met by such forces as people in danger of losing their property unless they fight for it are wont to assemble, the French did not think fit to continue their design, and re-embarked, contented with the plunder they had collected.

Practically, this was mere cross-raiding with which naval force had little to do, and naval strategy nothing. The landing at Port Morant, rather than in the neighbourhood of Kingston, seems to point towards an original idea of plundering and retiring, rather than of conquering and holding. The occurrence possibly illustrates the truth that if the sea is free, the enemy is also free to land where opposition is least; and that, though such raids may be checked by the assemblage of land forces subsequent to the enemy's disembarkation, land forces alone cannot be sufficiently numerous or ubiquitous to prevent such attempts being initiated.

Returning now to Europe, we have to bear in mind that the battle of La Hogue left the British for the time in almost unquestioned command of the European waters. Instead of having any hopes of disputing with England at sea, France was only solicitous of securing and concentrating the remains of her broken up fleet. The thoughts of the English were entirely directed towards preventing this concentration, and if it might be possible, capturing the ports in which the French war ships lay, with the simple object of destroying them. The Channel and western waters having passed under the English command for the first time, the naval war began to assume its second stage, and to favour attacks upon territory, which contained a main element of success as proceeding from an unthreatened sea base.

At a council of war called on board the Allied fleet in Torbay on the 5th June 1692, it was decided that part of the fleet should watch to the west of St. Malo, where it was believed that 25 of the enemy's ships had taken refuge, in order to cut off their retreat to Brest; while the rest of the fleet proceeded to Spithead to join

and support the land forces understood to be assembling there, for the purpose of a descent on St. Malo.

Considerable delays occurred in assembling the transports, so that it was not till the 28th July that a council of the sea and land officers could be called. It was then decided that nothing could be done by the ships against St. Malo, or the ships there, until the place had been sufficiently reduced by the land forces. Unfortunately the land officers were equally satisfied that nothing could be done by the troops unless they were supported by the fleet. It was then considered whether anything could be done against Brest, or failing that, against Rochefort. But the officers of the fleet had had experience of the helplessness of "the great ships" in a gale of wind, and had formed the opinion already alluded to in Chapter X. as to shifts of wind making either side of the Channel a lee shore in six hours, to a fleet in the middle of it,* and they all decided that it was too late in the season for either of these enterprises. But they agreed that the fleet might support any attempt of the troops on the coast of Normandy, or thereabouts, which would not occupy more than about a month. In the result no steps were taken, and the greater part of the ships from St. Malo were able to escape to Brest without meeting interruption.†

We have here a failure even to make an attempt at descent, due perhaps, in a small degree, to divergence of opinion between the land and sea officers, but more because of delay and the lateness of the season, the importance of the latter element hanging on the backward state of the marine architecture of the day. A century later, the expedition would probably have gone on without reference to the season, and a steam expedition would probably not have been delayed.‡

In 1694, the command of the sea being still undisputed in home waters, a proposal to attack Brest took practical form. Lord Berkeley was given the command of a squadron of 22 English ships of and above the fifth-rate, with 19 Dutch line-of-battle ships, and a full supply of bombs, advice-boats, fire-ships and small craft. Transport, either in the war-ships or otherwise, was to be provided for about 6,000 troops.

* Burchett, p. 471.

† Burchett, p. 470–476.

‡ Vice-Admiral Rooke, who had made a preliminary examination of the approaches to St. Malo, and who would have attempted some of the ships in the harbour if the pilots would have carried his ships in, seemed satisfied of the feasibility of an attack. Burchett, p. 472. Six or seven thousand men were prepared for landing. Entick, p. 563.

The main features of the plan were that Russell, who was to take a great fleet with him to command the Mediterranean Sea, and to assist the Spaniards against the French on the Spanish coast, should accompany Lord Berkeley's fleet towards Brest, and that the latter should then make for Camaret Bay, anchor and land the troops immediately. That when General Talmash, who was in command of the land forces, should have reduced the forts on the south side of the Goulet, the fleet might push in for the capture or destruction of Brest itself.

The two fleets parted on the 6th June, and Berkeley arrived at Camaret Bay on the 8th, when a council of war determined that General Talmash should at once land and attempt to make himself master of the fort at Camaret under cover of the frigates. "Accordingly a considerable number of forces were put on shore; but the French coast being fortified and intrenched almost in every place,

our men received so warm a reception that they were soon obliged to return to the boats, and that, too, in no little disorder.

"In this action we lost about 600* men; and the lieutenant-general himself being wounded in the thigh, died soon after at Plymouth. The *Monk*, *Charles* galley, and *Shoreham*, some of the ships which were sent in to protect the landing, and to batter the French forts, were very much shattered, and in them and the others about a hundred and twelve men were killed and wounded; a Dutch frigate was sunk, and her captain killed; besides which, we received many other damages.

"The whole extent of the Bays of Camaret and Bertheaume (which lie on each side of the entrance into Brest water) was, in a manner, a continued fortification; for where there was any place to put forces on shore, there had the French batteries and intrenchments, and they threw bombs at our ships from five or six places. . . .

"Thus ended this unlucky expedition; but I cannot leave it without making this observation, that the French would not, in all probability, have been in such a posture to receive our troops had not early advice been given of the debates and resolutions concerning this affair, by Frenchmen who were consulted and advised with therein, as hath been before observed."†

The elements of success in such an attempt as this were the command of the sea, without which it could not have been thought of, and that force enough should have been landed out of the area commanded by the forts. The causes of failure are therefore plain enough. The command of the sea was present, but not the other element. The naval and military commanders, indeed, had no idea of finding any important works defending the landing at Camaret Bay until they saw them, and General Talmash, when he landed, was well aware how desperate the venture was. The council of war was against the landing when it was seen how great the risk was; but Talmash insisted on it as involving the honour of the English nation. He took not over 900 men on shore with him, many of the boats were left hard and fast by the ebb tide, and it seems that the greatest loss was in the endeavour to re-embark.‡

The cause of failure, then, was the improper handling of the troops in landing, whether the force was or was not sufficient to meet unintrenched troops. We have seen the rule of landing out

* Entick says at least 500, p. 574 † Burchett, p. 499.

‡ Entick, p. 574.

of the area covered by the forts almost established in the West Indies, and we see it broken here. If Talmash was actually provided with force enough to maintain his position on shore, a landing in Douarnenez Bay might have proved as successful as that in Camaret Bay was disastrous.

We must now follow Admiral Russell into the Mediterranean, as his operations there throw some light on the particular field of naval strategy which we are examining.

The French at this time were making way in Catalonia; they had possessed themselves of Palamos, a sea-port north-east of Barcelona, and the fear was that if the French were left in command of the sea, Barcelona itself would fall when invested by land and water, and bombarded by the French fleet as it had been in 1691. Fears also pointed to Minorca as certain to fall into the hands of the French if the command of the sea was not disputed.

Russell entered the Mediterranean at the head of some 63 sail of the line, English and Dutch, and arrived at Cartagena on July 13th, 1694. He had intelligence of the French naval force, not materially superior to his own, being in the vicinity of Barcelona, and further intelligence soon reached him that the enemy, having notice of his arrival, had abandoned operations on the coast of Spain, and had retired to Toulon and Hyères.

As exhibiting the effect which the improvement of marine architecture was producing in placing naval warfare under settled rules, it is proper to remark here that the power of disputing the command of the sea was now well understood to be capable of holding territorial attacks in suspense. But it was equally apparent that these attacks would be resumed the moment the threat of the Allied fleet was withdrawn. Discussion turned wholly on the power the Allied fleet might have of wintering in the Mediterranean. The question was hotly disputed, for the idea of trusting "great ships" out of our home ports in the winter was a staggering one for the minds of that day.* The matter was decided from home, however, and the fleet kept its threat in force by wintering at Cadiz.†

* Burchett, p. 507. Lediard, vol. ii., p. 693. Entick, p. 575. Russell was himself against it, and seems to have thought the winter season altered all the conditions. He was quite ready to face the French fleet in the summer, but at first looked for a fortified port to spend the winter in.

† "The Spanish Secretary of State informed the admiral, soon after, that they were now under no apprehensions for Catalonia; but that it was much feared the French would attack the fleet in Cadiz Bay; but he knew these fears were ill-grounded. . . . to divert the Spanish Court from this melancholy apprehension, the Admiral assured

Russell received considerable reinforcements during the winter, and squadrons of the lighter ships were actually cruising during the winter months. In the spring, land forces to the number of about 4,500 arrived under the command of Brigadier-General Stewart. The same convoy conducted store ships and victuallers, as well as 12 bomb-vessels. The whole fleet then sailed for the neighbourhood of Barcelona, the French fleet not showing itself at all.

The Spaniards were exceedingly dilatory in assembling either their land or sea forces in preparation for freeing Catalonia. No operations could be entered on for some time, but towards the end of July 1695, the Spanish troops marched upon Palamos, and on the 9th August about 4,000 English and Dutch troops were landed there from the fleet, under the command of General Stewart and Count Nassau. Notwithstanding the failure of the Spanish to provide the troops landed with the necessaries promised, the siege progressed with rapidity and success. The better part of the castle and town were battered down and the remainder set on fire in several places. There seemed nothing to prevent the speedy fall of the place, when one of Russell's cruisers brought in a couple of the inhabitants of Toulon, who affirmed that the French had 60 men-of-war there, ready to put to sea.

In Russell's view, the strategic condition of the sea was wholly altered by this intelligence. It was no longer possible to risk interruption by the appearance of the French fleet. The troops were immediately embarked, the attack on Palamos was given over, and the fleet sailed towards Toulon in quest of the enemy.

This forms the second clear instance we have of the abandonment of an attack on territory as the direct consequence of threatened interruption from the sea. Four years had passed since the vials of wrath had been poured on the head of Commodore Wright for anticipating the rule of naval warfare now acted on by Admiral Russell, but laid down by Lord Torrington. It is by such actions that rules of war are gradually established. It is not that they have ever been absent, but that they have remained like an unknown rock of which the existence was not suspected until some ship ran upon it. We may suppose that it is now marked on the historical chart, and that its position is well known.

the Secretary, that as he would never have above two or three ships disarmed at a time, the enemy would be very daring indeed if they attempted to force him in that harbour, unless their numbers did much exceed his." Lediard, vol. ii., p. 695. Burchett, p. 514.

We pass back again to the West Indies, where the French had not as yet attempted to dispute the command of the sea with us, having but three ships of war, besides some 19 privateers, the latter incapable of doing more than they were prepared for, namely, attacking our commerce. We had then three rated ships in the West Indies, so that a comparatively small squadron sent from England would give an ample command for the success of territorial expeditions.

Captain Robert Wilmot was, under these conditions, placed in command of five rated ships, accompanied by a compact little army of 1,200 or 1,400 men, with a train of artillery and full supplies of stores and munitions. The intention was to attack Petit Guavas (Petit Goave), a fortified place on the north side and near the base of the long peninsula which runs out due west from the south-west corner of St. Domingo (or Hispaniola, as it was then called). The Spaniards possessing the east end of the island, it was arranged that they should co-operate, and in April 1695 Wilmot, with three or four ships, was communicating with the Governor of St. Domingo, while the bulk of his fleet and the transports were on the north side of the island about Samana Bay.

Bickerings, disputes, and jealousies broke out early and continued late between Wilmot and Colonel Lillingstone, who commanded the land forces, and the co-operation of the Spanish commanders was not secured without some additional friction.* But in the end it was determined that 1,700 Spaniards and 150 English troops should march across from San Domingo to Cape Francis, the easternmost French place of importance on the north coast, and should there meet the fleet and the troops landed from it. The plan was put in force, and, notwithstanding the disagreements, succeeded. The settlement fell, and the fort, which does not seem to have been inconsiderable, was abandoned, and blown up by the enemy. Spaniards and English then marched for sixteen days westwards to Port de Paix (Port Paix). Two thousand five hundred men had come by land, and men and guns were landed from the ships. The fort was besieged in form, and in form fell. It had mounted no less than 80 guns, and from Port de Paix and Cape Francis 130 guns and a considerable amount of ammunition were carried off.

* Lillingstone, after the publication of Burchett's account of these transactions, wrote a reply accusing Wilmot (who did not live to reach home) of all the crimes that a commander could well commit.

Sickness now breaking out amongst the troops, and divided counsels being still divided, the attack on Petit Guavas was given up. The squadron was separated so as to leave some strength in the West Indies, and Wilmot sailed for England, which, however, he did not live to reach, as I have already observed.

This expedition was successful as far as it went; remarkably so, if we take into account the quarrels of the commanders. Apart from these, it had all the elements of success; command of the sea, sufficient land force, and the support and co-operation of the fleet.* The aims of the expedition were destructive rather than conquering, but as there was an assured command of the sea, the difference in character of these two aims did not arise. A peculiarity of the operations lay in the fact that the landing was on friendly territory, with what amounted to a march across the frontier.

In 1696, the French had despatched a squadron under M. de Pointis, to endeavour to make a capture of the rich Spanish convoy from the West Indies. Admiral Neville, with a squadron, was sent to the West Indies with a superior fleet, and with the special object of thwarting the French design. The French finding nothing in the West Indies to dispute with them, used their command of the sea to capture and plunder Cartagena, on the Spanish main.† Failing in bringing de Pointis' squadron to action, but assured of his superiority by the flight of the French, Neville afterwards sent a detachment to plunder and ravage Petit Guavas, he himself remaining in the neighbourhood as cover.

In these two successful descents we have, on the one side, an example of action when in supposed command of the sea, and the somewhat narrower margin by which success, or at least full success, may sometimes be achieved. In the English attack on Petit Guavas, we have the command of the sea secured by the body of the fleet, which would contest any attempt to interfere with the detachment. In principle, the attack on Petit Guavas resembles that successful raid upon the Vlie described in my third chapter.

While these descents upon territory, ending in failure or success,

* Lediard uses two opposition accounts for his narrative, that of Burchett and that of Colonel Lillingstone; of the latter he rather makes light I think, because he had no map before him. The soldier's account bears the stamp of truth about it. Wilmot's death is hardly an excuse for putting forward a certainly garbled account.

† Burchett (p. 556) thinks Neville might have recovered Cartagena and destroyed the ships, had it been so determined.

were being transacted in the West Indies, in America and in the Mediterranean, our command in the home waters, which had led to the attempt upon Brest, led also, in the years 1694, 1695, and 1696, to a series of bombardments of French coast towns, and some lighter ravaging attacks, which, though they are not properly classed under the heading I have chosen for this chapter, require a moment's attention as bearing on the proposition that while every territorial attack requires a commanded sea as a general rule, there is little or no limit to be placed on the nature of attacks which can be conducted from a commanded sea upon territory.

Immediately after the failure at Brest, Dieppe and Havre were heavily bombarded; and inventors devised ingenious mechanisms for effecting the destruction of shipping, piers, and towns which trusted to the security of their land defences. A machine vessel was blown up at the pierhead of Dieppe, but with little effect. A Mr. Meesters brought forward an elaborate plan for smoking the inhabitants out of Dunkirk, and blowing up the forts by means of special machines. The plan was put in force under the auspices of Sir Cloudesley Shovel in September 1694, but the inventor's expectations were not justified by the result.*

The year 1695 opened with deliberations over the possibilities of effecting anything material by descents upon, or bombardments of, the French coast towns, no French naval force showing any inclination to dispute our command of the home waters. The thoughts of the councils settled upon Dunkirk and St. Malo. Mr. Meesters' plans against Dunkirk were not yet discredited, notwithstanding his failure, and it was decided that the attack on Dunkirk should be on his lines. As, however, he was not yet fully prepared, it was determined to occupy the time by the bombardment of St. Malo.

A considerable squadron under Lord Berkeley, with bomb-vessels and frigates, got before the place on the 5th July, and, notwithstanding the fire of many forts, the whole of the shells carried—some 900, including carcases—were poured into the town, which was set on fire in the west part and burnt furiously.

* Burchett (p. 504) has a remark on the operations of this year in the Channel which deserves quoting as exhibiting the *business* nature of war. "Thus ended our attempts on the French at home this year; and although I will not pretend to make an exact computation of the expense these bombardments put the nation to, yet I do verily believe it was more than equivalent to the damage the enemy sustained from them."

The squadron then passed on to Granville, which it is said was destroyed by the bombardment.

On the 1st of August, Mr. Meesters being ready with his machine vessels and smoke-boats, a combined attack by the frigates and bomb-vessels of the squadron was made, followed by the advance of four of the smoke-boats and intended to have been followed up by the machine, or explosive vessels. But the smoke-boats proved to be a failure, and though some damage was done by the shells fired, the attack was considered to be a fiasco, and led to mutual recriminations between Mr. Meesters and the sea officers.

Subsequently Calais was thoroughly bombarded for nearly a whole day, 600 shells being thrown into it, and this concluded the year's operations of this character on the French coast.

The year 1696 opened with a proposal by Sir George Rooke to make another attack upon Brest, but without landing. His proposal was:—

That the body of the fleet should be in Camaret and Bertheaume Bays, and a detachment be made to sustain the small frigates and bomb-vessels, while they went in to do what mischief they could. It was his opinion that by thus blocking up the enemy's fleet in their principal port, insulting their coasts, and burning their towns at the same time, it would expose them to the world, make them very uneasy at home, and give reputation to His Majesty's arms; and this he believed might be done, if speedily undertaken, with the assistance of some small frigates, which were much wanted.*

This project was not thought feasible; a council of war sat at Torbay to consider how the fleet could best operate during the summer, and it was put before this council that the French were seemingly disposed to make head again at sea.

It was agreed that if the French disarmed not, to proceed to the coast of France for the space of fourteen or fifteen days, for that thereby, if they had not an opportunity of destroying some of their shipping, yet it might very much alarm them, and occasion the weakening of their armies by keeping up their militia and standing forces.

It was also determined, that upon notice of their sending any squadrons to molest our trade, an equal strength should be detached to oppose them, and that when the French disarmed their ships, it would be convenient to divide ours, some to bombard their towns, and others on necessary services; but yet that the whole should be so disposed of as that they might unite upon any emergent occasion.†

The ultimate decision come to was to proceed to Brest in order to observe the condition of things there, and then to act as might be most desirable. The fleet accordingly looked into Brest in July, and finding that "all the great ships were up the river," with only

* Burchett, p. 546.

† Burchett, p. 546. The language comes with peculiar force from one who wrote before 1720 as Secretary of the Admiralty, and must have had access to all papers. It shows the distinction drawn between the condition when the command of the sea was not disputed, and that when it might be.

two light squadrons ready for sea, it was determined to carry out some bombarding and ravaging under cover of the main fleet.

This accordingly lay near Belleisle, while detachments ravaged the Ile de Groix, Haedik, and Houat, and the bomb-vessels, escorted and covered by a detachment, shelled the towns of Olonne and St. Martin further to the south, throwing into them nearly 2,000 shells and carcases.

If we take a general survey of what has been set forth in this chapter, we may draw a good deal of proof of the statements made in Chapter X. We can see at least a general tendency, both in the home waters and abroad, for both sides to require command of the sea before proceeding to territorial attacks. This is almost equally seen in what is commenced, abandoned, or omitted from consideration.

Commodore Wright operates against territory successfully so long as his command of the sea in the West Indies is not threatened. The moment it is threatened, he hastily abandons his territorial operations. Russell follows precisely the same course in the Mediterranean. The English forces in the Channel everywhere operate at will against the French coast, so long as there is no sign of any considerable French fleet being able to put to sea. The French, on their side, abandon their operations against the Mediterranean coast of Spain the moment they know that Russell may be in a position to interfere with them, and neither in the Mediterranean nor in the Channel is there any attempted territorial attack on their part.

When the command of the sea in the West Indies is divided, neither Wren on the English side, nor Count de Blanac on the French, feel themselves able for territorial attacks, though the French are in a decided superiority.

De Pointis' successful attack on Cartagena in the West Indies in 1696 may be regarded as, in some sort, an example to the contrary; but not so much perhaps when it is remembered that his particular quarry was the Spanish silver fleet, and that when he attacked Cartagena in furtherance of this aim, he was not aware that Admiral Neville was in pursuit of him, and we have noticed that in contemporary judgment Neville might have made him suffer for his exploit if he had been rather more active. And again, notwithstanding Neville's superiority, he seemed to have taken care only to engage a detachment of his fleet in the destruction of Petit Guavas, just as we have seen Lord Berkeley acting from

Belleisle upon the French coast under somewhat similar circumstances.

There is very little failure in the attack on territory when it is not interrupted by intelligence of approaching naval relief. When there is failure, as at Quebec and Brest, we have almost clearly, insufficient military force and a reliance on the battering co-operation of the fleet; or, as at Martinique, divided counsels and want of decision and speed.

If the strength of the land defences is properly estimated, if sufficient troops are employed, landed clear of the fortifications of the enemy, and supplied and supported from the fleet, there appears to be, so far as we have yet come, no reason to doubt the fall of any place attacked, provided relief does not come to it over sea.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea succeed or fail—(*Continued*).

Outbreak of the War of the Succession, 1702.—Preparations to attack Cadiz.—Questions as to amount and distribution of enemy's naval force.—Attack on Cadiz complicated by political considerations.—Cadiz.—Disputes as to landing and subsequent operations between sea and land officers.—Abandonment of expedition.—Attack on French fleet and treasure-ships in the inner harbour of Vigo.—Causes of success of attack.—Comparison with Farragut's attack on Mobile.—Captain John Leake, in absence of naval defence, raids Newfoundland.—Benbow in West Indies; a doubtfully commanded sea and no territorial attacks.—Whetstone reinforces Benbow.—Chateaurenault and Du Casse.—Their return to Europe leaves territorial attacks open.—Destruction of raiding force at Petit Goave.—Captain Hovenden Walker to West Indies.—Destruction of town of Basse Terre in Guadaloupe.—Failure to persevere.—Graydon fails to attack Newfoundland.—Rooke's proceedings in the Mediterranean, 1704.—Chases French fleet and falls back to Lagos Bay.—Reinforced by Shovel.—Capture of Gibraltar.—Battle of Malaga.

The outbreak of the War of the Succession, declared against France and Spain on May 4th, 1702, was signalized by the preparation of a great expedition destined for Cadiz, under the command of Sir George Rooke for the sea forces, and of the Duke of Ormond for the land forces. The fleet consisted of 30 English and 20 Dutch sail of the line, which, together with frigates, transports, store-ships, and other vessels, made up a total of 160 ships. The land forces amounted to some 12,000 men, of whom 9,600 were English. The expedition sailed from Spithead on June 19th, and, anchoring at St. Helen's, the main part lay there till July 1st.*

That this expedition was prepared with some knowledge of the distribution of the French naval forces there seems little doubt, but I have not found it easy to piece the information together.

* *An Impartial Account of all the Material Transactions of the Grand Fleet and Land Forces.* By an officer that was present in those actions. 1703.

Certain things were undoubtedly known, of which the following is a summary :—

As the relations between this country and France and Spain were growing strained in the summer of 1701, Captain John Leake had been sent to cruise off Brest in August, in order to gain intelligence. His news was that 8 French ships of war had gone to Cadiz, and that there were at Brest 19 sail of the line with fire-ships and a frigate, all ready to sail, under three flag officers.

On this intelligence Sir George Rooke had been cruising off Ushant in September, and had returned to Spithead on the 20th. He had previously detached Sir John Munden with a strong squadron, to see our West India trade well to sea. Sir George's intelligence was, that on the 3rd of August a small squadron, with store-ships, had sailed from Brest for the West Indies; also that Chateaurenault, with 10 line-of-battle ships, frigates, and store-ships, had gone to sea from Brest on the 29th August, the day Sir George had finally sailed from Torbay. These ships were understood to be victualled for six months. There were still 15 sail of the line lying at Brest, and they were stripping to refit against the next spring. It was also said that Count d'Estrées had arrived at Brest from Cadiz in order to take command in Chateaurenault's absence.*

Further intelligence was brought by Captain Loades, who probably arrived at home from Cadiz in January 1702. He had been several months at Cadiz, assisting the English merchants to bring away their goods as a preparation for the expected war. The Count d'Estrées had been at Cadiz all the summer, with 23 sail, which lay above the Puntales, and towards the latter end of October he had been joined by Chateaurenault from Lisbon, with 14 more sail; and there were, besides, a considerable number of fire-ships, bomb-vessels, and store-ships.†

At Cadiz it appears to have been understood that Count d'Estrées had departed with 7 sail and Spanish troops for Naples on the 1st November; and that Chateaurenault, with 26 sail had proceeded early in December for the West Indies. After this there were only a few sail left at Cadiz.

In April 1702, "a nimble frigate called the *Lizard*, commanded by Captain Rupert Billingsly," was sent to gain intelligence of

* Burchett, pp. 587–89.

† D'Estrées, by means of many advice-boats, kept himself fully informed of every movement of the English fleets, and when Chateaurenault sailed, he knew that Benbow had preceded him in September. Burchett, p. 610.

the French preparations in the Atlantic ports, and he, by means of a story about a ketch carried off by a felonious crew, managed to observe a great deal until he got into Camaret Bay and M. Coetlogon, the commander of the forts there, told him "that if he did not suddenly depart the road, he would fire on him." But he found du Casse's squadron—that which Benbow met afterwards in the West Indies—collecting in the Basque Roads, and apparently gathered that it was to go first to Ferrol, where troops were assembling, and then to proceed to the West Indies.*

I suppose it was on Captain Billingsly's intelligence that Sir John Munden, on May 12th, 1702, with 9 sail of the line and 2 frigates, was despatched to Ferrol to bar the entry of the French squadron. He heard on May 16th, being then on the coast of Galicia, that 13 French ships were on their way from Rochefort to Ferrol, and on the 27th he had the mortification to see 14 sail of what he supposed were all war-ships pass him into Ferrol, owing to his inability to get up to them. This having happened, other intelligence led the council of war to suppose that there were 17 sail of the line now in Ferrol, which was a force so greatly in excess of his own, that in pursuance of his interpretation of his orders, he fell back into the soundings, and then, on June 25th, he sailed up to Spithead, passing on his way the great fleet of Sir George Rooke, which was lying at St. Helen's.†

Three days before his arrival, Admiral Fairborne (June 22nd) had sailed with a squadron of 30 sail in all, to block up the force supposed to be in Ferrol, and with orders that, if they should have sailed, he was to cruise on a rendezvous thirty or forty miles north-west of Finisterre to await the arrival of Sir George Rooke. This latter officer sailed from St. Helen's on July 1st, but was obliged to bear up for Torbay, so that he did not reach Fairborne's rendezvous until July 30th. Arrived here, Rooke sent the *Lime* frigate to Ferrol for intelligence, which returned to report Ferrol empty and no signs of Fairborne. Rooke then bore up to the south-westward and on the 8th August, near Lisbon, Fairborne joined, having been blown down in that direction by a north-easterly gale.‡

* Burchett, in mistake, puts all this in 1701, and thereby makes the story more difficult to unravel.

† Munden was tried by court-martial for his failure, and though he was fully acquitted, the Queen, yielding to popular clamour, ordered him to be broke.

‡ Entick says (p. 624) that Fairborne "was reduced to great straights for want of provisions," which even at that date would have been remarkable after only a six weeks' cruise.

We must suppose, on these general grounds, that Sir George Rooke had every reason to believe that there was no naval force anywhere in his neighbourhood that was great enough to inconvenience him in any way, yet he seems from first to last to have exercised a certain caution before proceeding to Cadiz; and quite possibly this caution, arising from shadowy doubts as to possible interruption from the sea, may have been the seat of the dislike to the whole expedition, attributed to him by Bishop Burnet, and of his abstention from giving that full support to the Duke of Ormond after he had landed, which otherwise might have been expected.

On August 9th, frigates were sent into Lisbon to gain intelligence, and the fleet lay-to, pending their return. A council of war sat on the 11th, and on the 12th the *Isabella*, yacht, brought news that there were 4 French men-of-war and 4 galleys at Lisbon. On this Rooke steered for Cadiz, and about 5 o'clock on the 13th the fleet anchored about six miles west of the town of Cadiz.

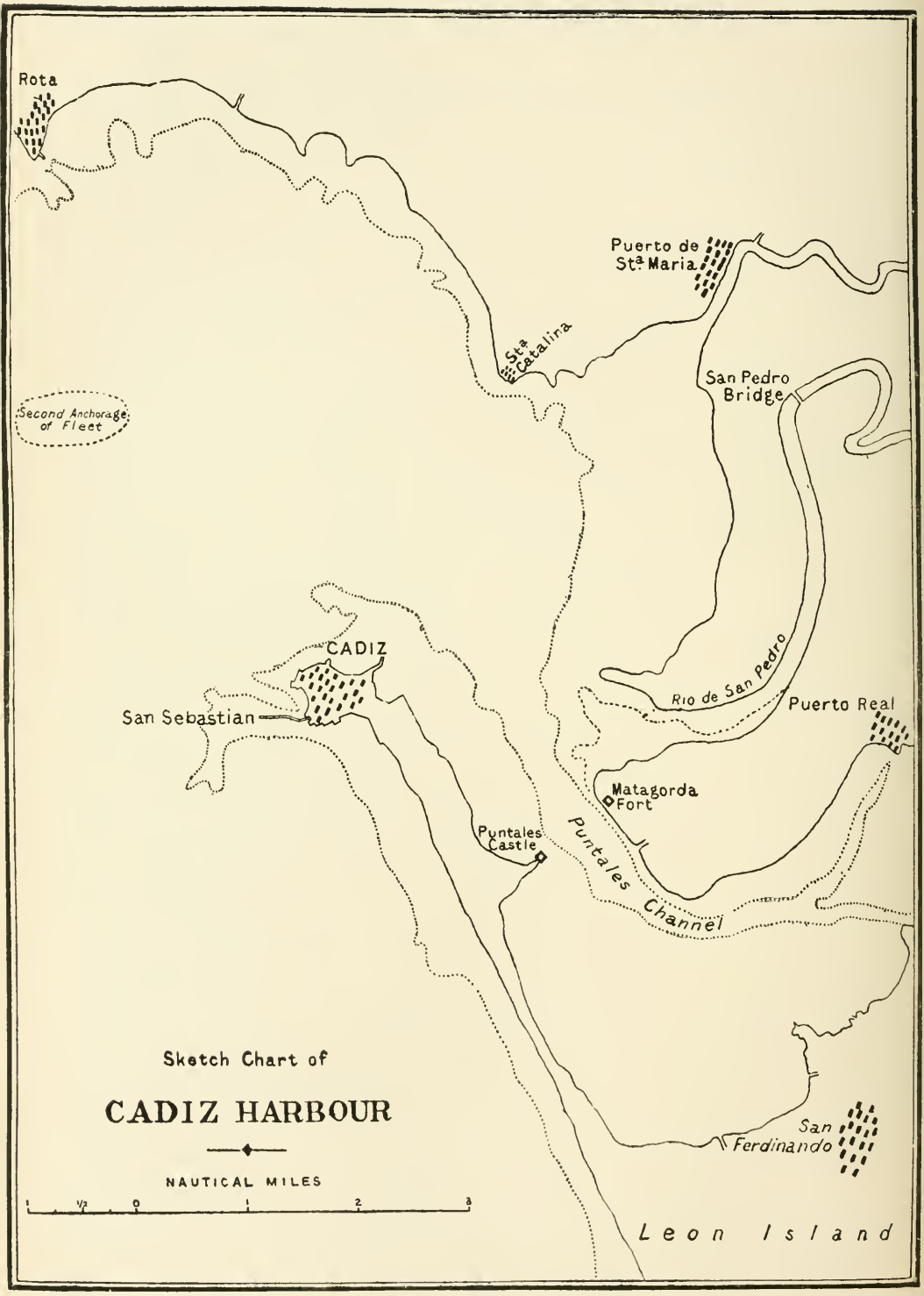
It is necessary to remember that this expedition was almost as much political as military, and might have been more so. The Allies supporting the House of Austria in its claims on the throne of Spain, against those of the Bourbons, looked to the advantage of possessing a port in Spain which should be open to them and devoted to the Austrian cause.* It was thought to be quite possible that Cadiz would declare for the Archduke Charles on the appearance of the allied fleet. These circumstances bring the case of the expedition somewhat within the category mentioned in Chapter X.† as being a landing on friendly territory, not involving the element of time, and therefore possible to be undertaken even when the command of the sea is disputed. On Sir George Rooke's arrival there was, however, no sign of friendliness on the part of Cadiz, and it became necessary to consider about obtaining the port by force.

Bishop Burnet represents Sir George Rooke as averse to the whole expedition;‡ and the *Life*, already referred to in the note, which may be presumed written with a favourable view of the Admiral's action, appears to bear the Bishop out as far as the

* See the letter of the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt in *The Life and Glorious Actions of the Right Hon. Sir George Rook, Kt.* (1707) to the Admiral.

† P. 219.

‡ "Rook spoke so coldly of the design he went upon, before he sailed, that those who conversed with him were apt to infer that he meant to do the enemy as little harm as possible."—*History of His own Times*, vol. v., p. 38. Ed. 1823.


Rota
Puerto de
Stª Maria
Stª Catalina
San Pedro
Bridge
Second Anchorage
of Fleet
CADIZ
San Sebastian
Rio de San Pedro
Puerto Real
Matagorda
Fort
Puntales
Castle
Puntales Channel
Sketch Chart of
CADIZ HARBOUR
NAUTICAL MILES
½
0
1
2
3
San
Ferdinando
Leon Island

actual operations against Cadiz were concerned. How far this arose from any personal jealousy of the Duke of Ormond, or professional jealousy of the sister service, is not so well made out. But the separate councils of war, at one time by the land and another by the sea officers, which were held, as well as the resolutions come to by those councils, seem to betray the reverse of that cordial co-operation between the services on which alone the attack on such a place as Cadiz could rely for success.

As may be seen by reference to the sketch plan, the town of Cadiz lies at the end of a narrow peninsula stretching to the north-westward for about five miles from the main part of the island of Leon. The peninsula runs out into, and partly shelters from westerly and south-westerly winds, the Bay of Cadiz. The eastern shore of the bay is intersected by streams and marshes, and a narrow channel runs to the southward and eastward along the eastern side of the peninsula, forming the inner harbour of Cadiz, and it was guarded near the entrance by the fort of Puntales on the southern or Cadiz side, and by the fort of Matagorda on the northern side. Cadiz itself was guarded by the fort of San Sebastian on its outer or western side; and across the bay to the northward was the town of Rota, and to the north-eastward, the fort of Sta. Catalina; while in the same direction, but farther up the bay, was the town of Puerto Sta. Maria, generally called Port St. Mary's in the English records of the time.

It may be seen that it is peculiarly a place for the combined attack of naval and military forces, and it cannot be forgotten what short work Howard and Essex made of it, the former surrounding the place with his ships while the latter conducted the operations by land. The actual capture of Cadiz was then made by the landing of Essex at Puntales under cover and support of the Dutch ships; and in the different accounts of the attack in 1702 no valid reason appears to show that the same system might not have been carried out.

The first proposal was to land on the sea side of the peninsula, but a joint council of war decided otherwise, and the landing was ultimately effected between Rota and Sta. Catalina, a mile from the latter place, so that its fire did not effect anything against the troops. A little four-gun battery, however, offered a slight opposition to the landing; but on the approach of the troops the Spaniards deserted it and spiked the guns.* Rota at once surren-

* *An Impartial Account, &c.*

dered, and the army marched to Puerto Sta. Maria, which was found to be deserted by the inhabitants. Here the soldiers fell to plundering, and got completely out of hand; and it was supposed that the political effect of their conduct was more disastrous to the Austrian cause than the progress of the military expedition could possibly be favourable to it.

Sta. Catalina fell easily to a detachment sent against it; but there now arose the question of the next step. Manifestly, if Cadiz was to be captured by the troops, they must march round by way of Puerto Real, and either cross the Channel near Puntales and Matagorda, taking Matagorda as a necessary preliminary, or else march still further south and advance on Cadiz along the peninsula; thus ultimately putting themselves just where they would have been had they landed as first proposed. Sir George Rooke submitted that Matagorda should be captured, and a party of infantry marched thither and broke ground against it. But the roads were not practicable for cavalry and artillery, and Sir George Rooke was asked to transport them by sea from Puerto Sta. Maria. The flag-officers in council separately, decided that if the crossing by sea was made at all, the embarkation should be from the Mole at Rota. But they said the embarkation and crossing was none of their business, and that it was enough for them to look after their ships. However, if it was fine, a flag-officer and a captain might be spared to assist and advise on the embarkation.*

Meantime Sir George Rooke and his council of flags changed their minds about Matagorda, and said that its capture would not help the navy in operating in the inner harbour above Puntales, where the French ships had withdrawn to be out of harm's way; and would not assist in the main design of capturing the town of Cadiz.

Ormond wrote of the possibility of taking Matagorda, and asked for boats to make a bridge across to Puntales. Rooke granted the boats and supplies, but it was resolved to have an independent bombardment of Cadiz by the fleet "the first fair night." Politically, this was objected to by the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt; and very naturally, as the bombardment of a place in the name of the Austrian Archduke was not calculated to impress the bombarded inhabitants in his favour. The flag council of war, with the kind of grim humour so often mixed with the most serious affairs in the days gone by, replied to the Prince's memorial that they had the highest

* *Life of Sir George Rook*, p. 79.

esteem for his person, but did not find his name in Sir George Rooke's instructions, and therefore could not attend to him. Nevertheless, on the plea of unsuitable weather, the bombardment was indefinitely postponed.*

Meantime Baron Sparr, who, with a detachment of 2,400 men, had begun the attack on Matagorda, was not making much progress, though reinforced by 800 men. He had mounted four guns in battery in low wet ground, so low and so wet that the guns stuck in it as they fired. They were replied to not only by Matagorda, but by the galleys stationed for defence, and by the 2nd of September Sparr had lost sixty-five men in killed and wounded. In fact, the attack on Matagorda was proving to be a failure.

It is not distinctly stated, but I infer that a good many seamen must have been landed, and that they were doing the rough work of the attack on Matagorda. Seeing the delay, the naval council of war came to certain conclusions:—

> Upon the repeated complaints of several of the captains of the fleet, that the subaltern officers and ships' companies began to grow very sickly by their constant employment and fatigues in digging, and other slavish services very unusual for seamen, who do think it indispensably our duty in the first place to take care of the fleet.†

Such was the preamble to a resolution to recall all the seamen on board, but while the order was given, it was intimated to the Duke that if, after watering, the health of the men would suffer it, the boats of the fleet might assist the troops. No doubt, it was said, the fleet was there to assist the troops in reducing Cadiz, but time was getting on. The troops had landed on the 15th of August, and that was more than a fortnight ago; it was not improper to ask how long the army was likely to be?

On this rather broad hint, the land officers' council resolved that as the taking of Matagorda was so difficult, and would not, even if accomplished, help the fleet to pass up to the inner harbour, it was judged impracticable by the land forces to make an attempt for the reducing of Cadiz, a work of considerable time for a much greater number of troops, and it was proper to re-embark and give up the objects of the expedition.

And thus, in fact, was this expedition abandoned. That there was no real reason for its abandonment may be said to be plain enough. And if we ask why it was abandoned, we can but be answered that it was not persevered in. Very possibly the political hampered and confused the military considerations, and

* *Life of Sir George Rook*, p. 90.
† *Ibid.*, p. 81.

caused in the first instance a landing in the wrong place, and in the second, checked the possible vigour of the naval attack. The force was ample for the object in view, had it been properly handled, for the whole of the troops estimated to be in Cadiz were but 4,000 foot and 1,000 horse of regular garrison.*

There was, as we have seen, no immediate question of possible interference with the operations from seaward; and we at least know, from what followed, that such interference was the very last thought entertained by the only French admiral in a position to put it in practice. But, notwithstanding, Sir George Rooke seems to have laid stress on keeping his fleet intact, and disentangled from the land operations.

On the whole, we are thrown back on the inference that this failure at Cadiz in 1702 was only an illustration of what mismanagement and divided counsels can effect in the face of every other prospect of success.

The attack on the French fleet guarding treasure and cargo ships at Vigo, carried out to such success by the same commanders less than a month after the failure of the Cadiz attempt, was not properly an attack on territory, though the territory had to be mastered before the ships could be attempted. It was essentially a joint attack, which could not have been even considered except as a joint attack. For the navy would have been powerless to penetrate the inner harbour had not the Duke of Ormond landed with 2,000 or 3,000 men,† and carried the batteries which guarded the southern shore of the entrance.

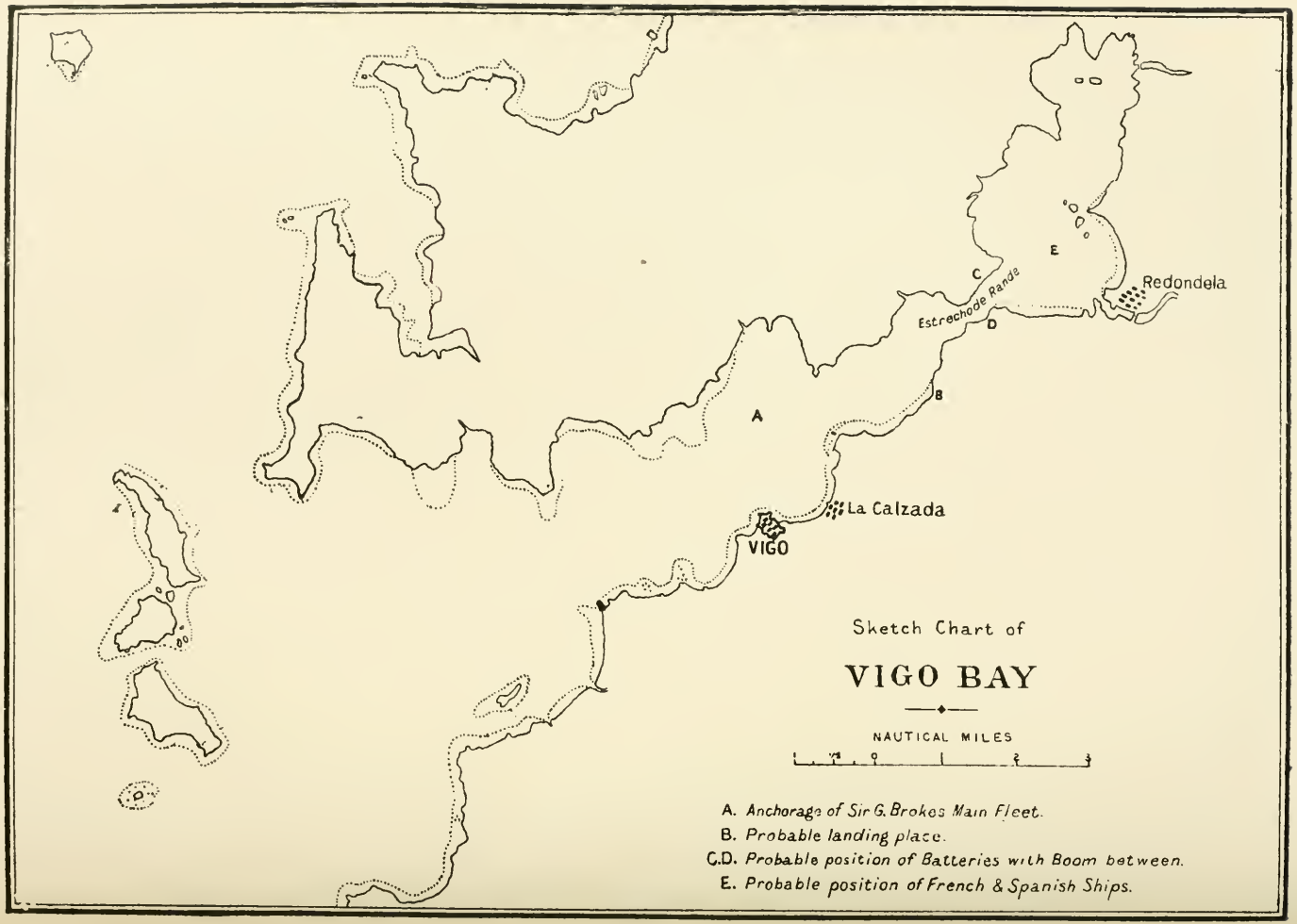
But the troops could not have landed but by support of the fleet, nor could they, after landing, have destroyed or captured the enemy's ships.

After its retirement from Cadiz, the fleet lay in Lagos Bay, where councils were held and considerations were entered into as to an attack on some other port of Spain. But all proposals of this kind were negatived, and the determination to return to England adhered to. Before the last ship quitted the bay, however, news reached her that ten days before, 30 French ships of war, convoying 22 Spanish galleons, had entered the port of Vigo. Sir George Rooke was already on his homeward route, but he was followed up, and on the 7th of October received the intelligence. A council of war was at once called, and an attack determined on.

Vigo Bay is a long tapering inlet, running from the sea to the

* *Annals of Queen Ann*, quoted by Lediard, vol. ii., p. 749.

† Markham's *Life of Robert Fairfax*, p. 159, says 7,500 in all.


Redondela
Estrechode Randa
C
D
E
B
A
La Calzada
VIGO
Sketch Chart of
VIGO BAY
NAUTICAL MILES
A. Anchorage of Sir G. Brokes Main Fleet.
B. Probable landing place.
C.D. Probable position of Batteries with Boom between.
E. Probable position of French & Spanish Ships.

north-eastward, and extending for some eight miles until it narrows into the Estrecho de Rande, which is only some 600 yards across, and then, inside this narrow passage, the water broadens into a sort of lake, which is now rather shallow. The town of Vigo—in 1702 a mere fishing village—is on the south side of the inlet, and the town of Redondela occupies the south-east corner of the inner lake just mentioned.

What may be called the entrance to the Bay of Vigo is about a mile and three-quarters across, and at the time I write of there do not appear to have been any batteries or forts there. The town of Vigo was itself defended by some works, but they were not of any magnitude, and did not affect Sir George Rooke's proceedings in any way.

Chateaurenault had drawn the whole of his ships and their convoy through the Estrecho de Rande, and forts and batteries had been erected on each side of the strait at its narrowest part; the works on the south side mounting 38, and that on the north 17, guns.*

A boom connected the two forts and obstructed the passage; and far within the boom the French fleet was anchored in the form of a half moon, intended to protect the galleons.†

On the 10th October Sir George Rooke's fleet passed up the Bay. It was fired on by the forts at Vigo in passing, but without effect, and it anchored above the town to observe the situation and mature the plan. It was decided in the first place to land sufficient force to capture the batteries on the south side, and that when the English flag should be hoisted as a sign of the works having changed hands, 25 of the ships should proceed to break the boom and pass on to the attack of the French.

About 10 o'clock on the morning of the 11th the Duke of Ormond landed, with 2,000 or 3,000 men,

In a sandy bay about two leagues from Vigo, and marched towards the battery and fort on the starboard side going into Redondela, which we attacked, and met with a vigorous opposition; but our men so boldly pressing forward, made themselves

* *An Impartial Account, &c.*, p. 22.

† "On the left hand was a battery of about 20 guns, and between that and the fort on the right a boom was placed athwart the harbour, made of masts, cables, and other proper materials, the French ships of war lying almost in the form of a half-moon a considerable distance within this boom, whereas, had they anchored close to it and laid their broadsides to bear upon our ships as they approached, we should in all probability have found the task much more difficult. But they had so great a dependence on the strength of the boom, as to think themselves sufficiently secured by that and the batteries on both sides of the harbour."—Burchett, p. 626.

masters of the battery and trenches, and (forced) the enemy to retreat, although they had at least 20,000 in and near this place, yet durst not engage us, because they saw the resolution of our forces. We had no sooner took the platform, on which were 38 cannon, but the detached ships, which were drawn up in line of battle, began to sail, Admiral Hopson with undaunted courage leading the van, and forced the boom with his ship; at the same time, the *Association*, Captain Bucknam, laid his broadside against the battery on the other side of the harbour (in which were 17 guns), so that for a considerable time the firing of great and small shot on both sides was so terrible that I want words to relate it; besides the dismal aspect of many ships on fire, which our enemy put in flames and then left them. Some they sunk and others we took; and our grenadiers drawing up against a fort they had of 12 guns, and saluting them with their grenadoes, they surrendered and became prisoners of war; and in it were above 200 French and Spaniards, and amongst them several men of note, as the Vice-Admiral of the French fleet, with several captains of their ships, and the Lieutenant-General of the Spanish flota, but all the private men were dismissed in a few days. Admiral Hopson's ship was clapt on board by a French fire-ship, and had been burnt had not the latter fortunately blown up; yet the former received much damage by it, and lost in the action, being killed and drowned, upwards of 100 men, the other ships' loss being inconsiderable. And our loss on shore was 2 officers killed and 4 wounded, and about 40 private men killed and as many wounded. Our enemy's loss was not inferior to ours, and amongst theirs the governor of the fort was killed. This glorious victory was obtained in about two hours' time.

So the same night we marched about three miles farther, where we lay on our arms all night, though very wet, &c., and the ships and galleons on fire saluted us with several shot when burnt down to the lower tier. And when they blew up, 'twas (tho' dismal) inexpressible fine. The next morning we marched to Redondela, from whence the inhabitants were fled; yet great bodies drew together on the mountains, but finding us in so good a posture to receive them, they would not attack us. Also about this place we took many prisoners, &c., but had none taken and killed of ours.*

Such was the famous attack upon the ships in Vigo Bay. There were inside the boom 18 French and 3 Spanish men-of-war, most of them being line-of-battle ships; and they were intended to protect 13 rich Spanish galleons, carrying from 20 to 30 guns each. The result of the attack was that everything that floated inside the boom was either burnt, sunk, or captured. Six French ships and 5 galleons were taken, 8 French ships were burnt, 4 French ships were sunk, 5 galleons were captured, and the remainder were either burnt or sunk. It is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable failures of a fortified port to protect a fleet which had sought its shelter, and it seems probable that the French had felt something like a sense of absolute security in their position. From the passage quoted it would appear that the ships had disembarked men and stores for the land defence of the entrance, and must therefore have considered the position, so arranged,

* *An Impartial Account*, &c., pp. 21–25. There is but one sandy bay between Vigo and Redondela, and this was probably the place of landing.

more secure than it would have been had they kept their ships in the outer harbour, in order to meet the enemy broadside to broadside there, placing only the galleons in the inner lake, where it might be trusted that they would be out of harm's way. Modern science cannot be said to have greatly advanced on the method of land defence adopted by Chateaurenault. But, then, probably modern science could not better the method of attack decided on by Sir George Rooke.

In some respects Rooke's achievement is paralleled by that of Farragut at Mobile. In this case, too, there was obstruction covered by works guarding a narrow passage into wider water, where the ships lay which were the admiral's objective. But at Mobile the obstructions were sub-marine mines, and at Vigo a boom. Moreover, at Mobile no troops were landed, the passage being "rushed" at speed. We may, perhaps, say that the method pursued at Vigo made assurance doubly sure, and ought generally to succeed if carried out in sufficient force.

At Vigo, as at Mobile, no question of the command of the sea arose, for the only naval force competent to interfere, was the very force which was the object of attack.

In this same year (1702), in June, Captain John Leake conducted a small raiding expedition to the shores of Newfoundland, which was chiefly directed against shipping, but incidentally, as it were, destroyed fishing stages on the land here and there, and demolished a small fort of 6 guns at Fortune Bay. There was nothing heard of any naval force of the enemy in the neighbourhood, so that nothing need be noted except the impunity with which ravages can be committed in the absence of opposing naval force.

Vice-Admiral Benbow had been detached from Sir George Rooke's fleet off Scilly on the 2nd September 1701. His force was 10 sail of the line, and his destination the West Indies. As war was not yet declared, his arrival at Barbados on November 3rd was precautionary merely, and could not immediately lead to any operations. He proceeded to visit and reassure the Leeward Islands in our possession, and then reached Port Royal, Jamaica, on December 5th. At Port Royal he had news of 5 French ships having been seen off the west end of Cuba, and then, on the arrival of the new Governor of Jamaica, Brigadier-General Selwyn, at the end of January 1702, he had advice of the arrival of a French squadron at Martinique, which it was confidently asserted was stronger than his own.

In the beginning of March, Benbow heard that Admiral Coetlogon, who commanded the squadron which had been seen off Cuba, had joined Chateaurenault at Martinique, and that the combined fleet had put to sea. This alarmed Barbados, inasmuch as there was no naval force sufficient to prevent an attack, had Chateaurenault been determined to make one. Later intelligence, which Benbow showed himself very solicitous to collect, assured him that Chateaurenault was in the Gulf of Logane,* with 30 ships of war. On May 8th Benbow, having put to sea for a cruise, met Admiral Whetstone with orders from England. In the middle of May he learnt that on the 17th of April 17 sail had passed the coast of Venezuela, near Trinidad, steering for Cuba. Soon after, he heard that Chateaurenault was at Havanna with 26 ships of war, waiting for the flota from Vera Cruz in Mexico, in order to escort it home, as, we have seen, he ultimately did.

It would appear that Whetstone must have brought orders to Benbow to begin hostile operations, for his first act after meeting him was to send 3 ships to cruise off Petit Goave, where they made several captures of ships. He must also have thus been advised of the probable arrival of the squadron of du Casse, for he sent Whetstone, with 5 sail of the line and a fire-ship, in hopes of intercepting him off the west end of San Domingo, while he prepared to follow up himself shortly after.

He accordingly left Port Royal on July 11th with 8 sail of the line and a fire-ship, and three days later, getting news that du Casse was expected at Leogane, in the Gonave Channel, he beat up for that port. He remained in this neighbourhood until August, capturing ships, but avoiding all territorial attacks.† He then got news that du Casse had gone towards Cartagena, and on the 10th August sailed from a bay near Cape Donna Maria, the westernmost point of San Domingo, where he had been watering, towards Cartagena himself. It was on the 19th, in the evening, that Benbow discovered du Casse's squadron, then consisting of 5 sail of the line, with a transport and small vessels, Benbow's squadron consisting of 6 sail of the line; and then began that indecisive action which reflected such disgrace on the British arms, and led to the Admiral's death by the enemy's shot, and to that of two of his captains at the hands of the executioner.

I have dwelt upon the movements of the hostile squadrons, in

* Now called Gonave Channel, in the west of San Domingo.

† "Thereby fatiguing the people, who were apprehensive that he would land, which his circumstances would by no means permit him to do."—Burchett, p. 594.

order to mark the absence of the idea of territorial attack on either side, the one being wholly intent on commerce protection, and the other on attacking the enemy's war-ships whenever they could be found sufficiently weak to justify such attempts.

In 1703 Sir Cloudesley Shovel was sent with a fleet into the Mediterranean, and his orders involved descents upon the coasts of France, Spain, Italy, and Sicily. Nothing was done, however, but even had there been, I should not have felt it necessary to dwell upon it, as, in every case, the landings were to have been made in hopes of assistance from a friendly part of the population, and therefore would have come under the form of attack on territory which least involves questions of naval strategy.

Returning to the West Indies, we have to note that Chateaurenault had gone home with the Spanish flota in August or September 1702, only to fall into the hands of Rooke at Vigo in October. Du Casse also went home with 4 sail, and was met by Vice-Admiral Graydon on the 18th March 1703. Therefore when, after the death of Benbow, which occurred on November 4th, 1702, Rear-Admiral Whetstone found himself in command of perhaps 13 sail of the line, he was quite in command of the West Indian seas, and on du Casse's departure had probably nothing to oppose him.

The authorities of Petit Goave do not appear to have recognised the condition of the sea, for they employed themselves in fitting out a small squadron of privateers, intended to carry over 500 men for a raiding descent on some part of Jamaica. Having no information, but merely cruising to check any hostile movements and capture the enemy's merchant ships, Whetstone fell upon this squadron and destroyed it.*

While Whetstone was thus engaged to leeward at and near Jamaica, the force in the West Indies was increased by the arrival at Barbados, in the beginning of January 1703, of Captain Hovenden

* Captain Berkeley, in his *Naval History*, has the following, at p. 583:—"The French had determined to make a descent upon the Island of Jamaica, to burn and plunder. They had got 500 men for the purpose, the place of landing, the conduct of the expedition, even the division of the plunder was adjusted by regular agreement, and these ships were to have carried them. The people of Jamaica, who had often been idly alarmed, knew nothing of their danger. The country would have been a scene of blood and fire, for they could no more have prevented these people landing on the north side, where they intended, than they could have opposed them when landed." Berkeley commanded the *Windsor*, under Vernon, in 1739–41. He probably understood the nature of naval war well, and of its particular application in that part of the world. He describes the successful counter-raid organized by the merchants of Jamaica in 1703, on the coast of the Spanish Main.

Walker with 5 sail of the line, convoying 10 transports, having on board 4 battalions of troops. He soon after sailed to the Leeward Islands, and arranged with General Codrington for an attack on Guadaloupe.

The accounts of this attack are very meagre; it does not appear to have been organized for the conquest and occupation of the island, but only for a raid upon it, and yet there was great disappointment that the conquest was not made. A landing was first effected at the north end of Guadaloupe, where the troops burnt some houses and plantations and then came on board again, the fleet meantime standing off and on. On the 12th March, at daylight, Colonel Byam was landed with his own regiment and 200 of Colonel Whetham's regiment at Les Habitants, where there was a sharp encounter with the French. At 9 the same morning Colonel Whetham was landed north of a town called La Bayliffe, where the enemy had thrown up breast-works and defended themselves with spirit. The works were carried one by one, our troops continually pressing on towards Basse Terre, assisted occasionally by the covering fire of one of the ships. The enemy was gradually forced back until they took refuge in the castle and fort of Basse Terre, which they held until April 3rd, then blowing them up and retiring to the mountains.

The English now ravaged and plundered right and left, then burnt the town, razed the fortifications, embarked the best of the guns and burst the rest, and finally returned on board. Though Lediard tells the story as if the success had been complete, Berkeley and Entick exclaim against the result, while Burchett makes the re-embarkation the inevitable consequence of "the circumstances our troops were in," and of the French having landed, on another part of the island, about 900 men from Martinique as a reinforcement.

There had been a good deal of trouble from sickness. General Codrington had first succumbed, and returned to Nevis; then Colonel Whetham, on whom the command devolved, followed him. Then the command fell to Colonel Willis, "who," says Entick,

> Upon certain information that the French had landed 900 men on the back of the island, called a council of war, in which it was resolved to embark the forces. And it must be acknowledged that this service suffered not a little from some disputes that happened between the land and sea officers; which is, generally speaking, the ruin of our West India expeditions.*

* P. 640. In a note, Entick says: "The Governors of our Colonies have scarce ever been able to agree with the commanders of our squadrons; and with respect to this very expedition, there were as warm complaints made against the commodore as ever came

All, therefore, that we have to note of this expedition is the strangeness of the story that the French were able to throw 900 men across from Martinique, while Commodore Walker was in full command of the sea and had ample force to have prevented any such thing. Walker was greatly to blame; for his chief business ought to have been the insurance of the troops against interruption of this kind. We have seen in the former attack on this very island, how insufficient naval force to prevent the landing of reinforcements compelled the abandonment of the whole design; here, where there was no opposing naval force, a few of the lightest cruisers would have sufficed.*

When the news of Benbow's death reached England, Vice-Admiral Graydon was appointed to command in his stead. He was to take three sail of the line with him, and his orders as regarded the West Indies were mostly defensive. But as there was no naval force to hinder him, he was, after sending home such ships and troops from the West Indies as required relief, and stationing at Jamaica and elsewhere such ships as might be proper for their defence against raiding attacks and attacks upon shipping, and also, after providing for homeward-bound convoys, to proceed with land and sea forces for operations against Newfoundland.

He carried out all the defensive part of his orders, but did not see his way to make any attacks upon the enemy's territories in the West Indies, owing probably to the paucity, the unfurnished and sickly state, of the troops stationed there. Then he found himself with his ships and land forces near Cape Race on August 2nd. Here the ships fell into a fog which lasted for thirty days, and left them so scattered that it was the 3rd September before they were sufficiently concentrated to think of any land operations. Then a council of war was called to consider the situation. At this council sat the Vice-Admiral, Rear-Admiral Whetstone, and

from the West Indies." But he represented that the Road of Guadaloupe was excessively bad, that he found it impossible to procure pilots, that several of the ships lost their anchors, the ground being foul and the water deep, so that some or other were daily forced out to sea; and, added to this, that the troops were under excessive difficulties, having no guides to conduct them, and being under the utmost want of necessaries to support them. Besides, the island was not abandoned till the expedition had cost us pretty dear, as appears by the following account of our loss. There were killed in the first action, 1 major, 2 captains, 6 lieutenants; and wounded, 2 colonels, 7 captains, and 9 lieutenants; and 3 ensigns died; 154 soldiers were killed, 211 wounded, 72 died, 59 deserted, and 12 were taken prisoners.

* The Comte de Lapeyrouse Bonfils, in his *Histoire de la Marine Française*, says (vol ii., p. 28): "L'arrivé de M. Gabaret avec huit cents hommes inspira une nouvelle ardeur aux Français et porta le decouragement dans les rangs ennemis."

thirteen captains of the sea forces; Colonel Rivers, who commanded the land forces in succession to General Collembine, who had died some time before, six captains, and an Engineer officer. This council concluded that as the ships were mostly in a bad state; as the whole of the troops they could muster were now under 1,100 men; and as both soldiers and sailors were weak and sickly, while the intelligence from Placentia, the objective of the expedition, represented it in a good state of defence with a superior garrison, it was judged to be impracticable to make any attack so late in the season. The final result was the return, in a more or less disordered condition, of the whole expedition to England.

Burchett, in wishing that he "could, by summing up the whole, make any tolerable comparison between the services this squadron did the nation and the expense which attended it, and, which is still more valuable, the lives of many good officers, seamen, and soldiers," lays much stress on the time many of the ships had been out, some of them having been in the West Indies since 1698.* The inferences we may draw are somewhat wider. We see on the one hand that a doubtfully commanded sea is still preventive of territorial attacks; and that even the assured command of the sea does not always admit of such operations. We note again that as at Guadaloupe sufficient force, well handled, landed from, and supported by, the fleet, should always be successful; want of perseverance, aggravated by differences of opinion between the land and sea commanders, may easily cause conquests to stop short of completion.

On the other hand, the case of Placentia may teach the nation that expects to fail in its command of the sea, that even a reputation for a defensive state, combined with accidents such as are common to the sea in all ages, may in practice become armour of proof.

Sir George Rooke had proceeded to Lisbon with a fleet and troops in support of the Austrian Archduke Charles, who accompanied the force, in February 1704. It was feared that this force might not be large enough to avoid blockade at Lisbon by the French fleet preparing at Brest, and it was demanded by the Admiral that strenuous exertions should be made to bring up his strength not only to avoid blockade, but to prevent the Brest and Toulon fleets from forming a junction, and thereby threatening the

* Burchett, p. 607.

command of the sea which was necessary to carry out the intended operations on the Mediterranean coast of Spain.*

Orders to proceed into the Mediterranean reached Rooke in April, he being informed that there was a probability of the French having designs upon Villa Franca and Nice, and that he was to take proper measures for frustrating them should the news be true. The flag-officers in council, however, represented that their force was not large enough to perform what might have been expected of it, for that both at Brest and Toulon the French preparations were active.† On the 25th of April a despatch from Lord Nottingham of the 10th of April, informed Rooke of the intention of the French to attack these places by sea; and it was thereupon determined to proceed to their relief, but sailing to the northward of the Balearic Islands, and as near the coast of Spain as the winds would permit, towards Barcelona, for intelligence. If there were no intelligence of the supposed attacks, the fleet was not to go beyond Barcelona, and was to execute there the designs for its recovery to the Austrian cause which had been put forward by the Almirante of Castile, he holding that if troops were landed, and a show of bombardment made, the place would declare for Charles III.

The force which it was intended Sir George Rooke should lead on this service was very considerable; it was to comprise 30 English and 18 Dutch line-of-battle ships, with frigates, fire-ships bomb-vessels, &c., making up a total of 69 sail.

But this was not considered alone sufficient either for the defensive or offensive operations upon territory which were to be undertaken. Sir Cloudesley Shovel was placed at the head of 25 sail of the line, and about the middle of May sailed to mask the supposed operations of the Brest fleet fitting out under the Count of Toulouse. As it was not quite certain whether the force at Brest might be designed to fall upon Sir Cloudesley's possibly inferior fleet in the Channel, or to proceed to the Mediterranean and form a junction with the Toulon fleet believed to consist of 25 sail of the line, Shovel was, if he had certain intelligence that Brest was empty, to fall back to the chops of the Channel, and not to proceed to the Mediterranean, or to detach ships thither until he was pretty sure that the French had gone south.

On his way to Brest on May 15th, Shovel got news not only from home, but from one of his look-out frigates, that Brest was

* Burchett, p. 665.

† *Ibid.*, p. 669.

really empty; he fell back to a rendezvous 60 miles W.S.W. of Scilly, and then, leaving a ship there to give notice to stragglers, he proceeded to his second rendezvous, 420 miles W.S.W. of Scilly. This second move was determined by the non-receipt of intelligence, and by the fear that the French might intend to operate against our trade. On the 28th of May, as nothing had been seen or heard of the French, it was judged that they must have proceeded either to blockade Rooke—supposed to be still at Lisbon—or to join the Toulon squadron, and so keep the command of the Mediterranean Sea. Shovel thereupon, after making provision for the security of the trade, sailed for Lisbon with the 22 ships of the line to which he had been limited by his orders, to join or to relieve Rooke at Lisbon as the case case might be.*

Rooke, however, had sailed for the Mediterranean before this, and was off Cape St. Vincent on April 29th. He had then with him 22 English and 14 Dutch sail of the line. The actual force which the French no doubt knew they might have to meet in the Mediterranean, if they proposed to make either territorial attacks without securing the command of the sea, or to make a definite struggle for that command, was no less than 58 sail of the line. Rooke's rendezvous was Altea Bay, north of Alicante; and off Cape Palos on the 8th of May, some of his ships chased a small French squadron, but without being able to come up with it.

Meantime, the Count of Toulouse had actually quitted Brest on the 6th of May, with 23 sail of the line, and having touched at Cadiz proceeded on his way towards Toulon.

The Prince of Hesse pressing Rooke with assurances that Barcelona would certainly come over to the Austrian cause if an attack by land and sea were threatened, Rooke yielded. On the 19th of May 1,200 English marines and 400 Dutch troops were landed, and the Dutch ships made a show of seriously bombarding the place. But it was soon discovered that the French were too strong for the Austrian party, the men landed were re-embarked, and the fleet stood over toward Hyères.

As bearing on the strategy of territorial attack from the sea, we may here note that Rooke does not appear at this time to have supposed that there were more than 15 or 16 ships ready at Toulon,† while he had 36. Even had the attack been serious, and

* See, for interesting light on these translations, Laughton's *Memoirs of Lord Torrington.*

† Burchett, p. 676. According to Troude, the information was probably correct.

had he intended to press it, there was nothing in the way of interference from the sea to be apprehended, and nothing to prevent him from preserving a vastly superior force intact to meet it should intervention, contrary to all reasonable expectation, occur. But, in fact, the strategical question was little touched in executing what was a mere demonstration, not expected to last more than a few hours.

On the 27th of May, at night, the English look-out ships observed a great fleet standing for Toulon, and Sir George Rooke, being informed, at once chased to the northward after them, and continued so all night. At daylight it was calm, but Rooke counted 40 sail doing all they could to pass into Toulon. He thereupon called a council of war, which decided to continue the chase as long as there might be a hope of cutting the enemy off, and when that failed, to fall back out of the Mediterranean again, as the junction of this fleet—which was that of the Count of Toulouse which we have just left—with the 15 or 16 supposed to be ready in Toulon, would be too powerful to be safely encountered by Sir George Rooke's present force.

We may here note, however, that Rooke was really in the lion's mouth, had French intelligence and French enterprise been combined in full efficiency. As it was, the junction of the two fleets was not effective until July 22nd, before which date the Toulon ships were not ready to put to sea.*

Rooke chased till the evening of May 29th, when the French were within 90 miles of Toulon. The fear of an immediate junction of the enemy's forces seems then to have prevailed on the minds of the flag officers, and the fleet bore up for the Straits of Gibraltar, through which they passed on June 14th. I suppose Rooke must have been aware that Shovel was likely to reinforce him, for he only fell back as far as Lagos Bay, where he was joined by Shovel on the 16th of June.

The strategical situation was now wholly changed. Even with all the ships of the Toulon fleet, the Count of Toulouse would not make up more than some 48 sail,† while Rooke had ten sail more. The flag officers were now of opinion that operations

* Troude, vol. i., p. 250. He says that the delay was designed, and meant by the Minister of Marine to prevent the Count of Toulouse from reaping credit.

† The actual force assembled two months later was 50 sail of the line, 24 galleys, 7 frigates, and 7 fire-ships (Troude, vol. i., p. 250), when Rooke's, by detachments, had come down to 55. See *The Ancient and Modern History of Gibraltar*, by J. S. Dodd, 1781, p. 38.

against Cadiz and Barcelona might be renewed if land forces in sufficient numbers could be obtained, but they were probably supposing at this time that the French possible force did not amount to more than 39 or 40 sail.

The want of sufficient troops making an attack on Cadiz impracticable, and the Austrian claimant to the Throne of Spain, as well as the King of Portugal, being anxious that something should be done on the coast of Andalusia, a council of war was called on the 17th of July, the fleet being then twenty miles east of Tetuan, and a determination to make a sudden attack on Gibraltar come to.

Such an attack as this, where the sea was not assuredly commanded, required consideration. It does not seem probable that had it necessitated the employment of any large portion of the fleet, it could have been attempted, in view of the possibility of interruption from Toulon. But though the place was naturally and artificially remarkably strong, it was probably known to be very inefficiently garrisoned. It is certain that the intention was to capture it in a rush, and by surprise.

The fleet being in Tetuan Bay, on July 19th Rear-Admiral Byng received orders to take with him 11 English and 6 Dutch ships of the line, with 3 bomb-vessels, and to be ready to proceed to bombard Gibraltar, previously discharging all the marines of his squadron into the other ships. These, with the rest of the marines of the fleet, were to be put under command of the Prince of Hesse, and to land, with 18 rounds of ammunition each man, on what is now the neutral ground. Signals were arranged both for night and day as to anchoring and bombarding, which latter was to follow the advices from the Prince of Hesse.

The wind did not prove favourable till the 21st, when Rooke made Byng's signal to proceed in execution of his orders. On the 22nd, the whole fleet, except a squadron to be mentioned presently, followed Byng and anchored at the head of Gibraltar Bay, and quite apart from the operations. The marines, to the number of about 1,800, were landed with scarcely any opposition, and they took possession of some mills which then existed within gunshot of the north part of the town. The Prince of Hesse sent a summons to the governor of the place to declare for Charles III., but no answer coming back that night, nor early next morning, Byng proceeded to warp his ships into their positions under a desultory fire. Meantime, the governor sent his answer, expressing

a determination to defend the place as a loyal soldier of Philip V. When Rooke heard of the answer, he sent 5 additional ships to Byng, which made up his squadron to 22. The whole of this day seems to have been spent in getting the ships into position, but as the marines barred all approach on the land side, the delay was of no material consequence. At night Captain E. Whitaker was sent in with some boats to burn a French ship which lay at the old Mole, while Byng, to harass the enemy, directed the mortar vessels to open fire on the town.

The next morning, the 23rd, about 5 o'clock, the forts began to fire on the ships, to which they, as ordered by signal, replied by so heavy a return fire that the inhabitants hurried out of the town and up the hill. The smoke became so great that Byng sent orders down the line to cease firing altogether from the light guns forming the upper tiers, and to direct a careful and slow fire from the lower tiers of heavy guns only*; about noon, he stopped the firing altogether, in order that he might see what effect had been produced. Whitaker took these orders, and when on board the *Lennox*, communicating them to the commander, Captain Jumper, who was nearest the New Mole, both officers concurred in thinking that as the batteries at that point were silenced and many of the guns dismounted, it might be possible to land and capture them. Whitaker returning to Byng with this opinion, the Admiral at once made signal for the boats to assemble, sending to Sir George Rooke to ask that the boats of the rest of the fleet should follow up.

But before these boats arrived, Captains Hicks and Jumper had dashed in with the boats of Byng's squadron. Sir Cloudesley Shovel had got on board Byng's flag-ship, presumably to see the fight at a nearer view. He noted that a great number of priests and women who had taken sanctuary in the Chapel of Our Lady of Europa, were making a rush back to the town again on seeing the boats approach. He caused a gun to be fired across their path, which frightened them all back into the chapel again. The discharge of this gun was taken as a signal to reopen fire, and under cover of it the seamen landed, and pursuing two different routes, clambered over the works "with great valour and much

* Byng's orders almost seem to find their ectype in what happened at the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882.

more courage than prudence."* Either by accident or design, while one of the parties was mounting to the capture of what was called the Castle, and seems to have been a principal work on the New Mole, it blew up, and 2 lieutenants with 40 men were killed, and 60 wounded by the explosion.† The party were so disheartened by this accident that they turned back towards the boats; but just then Whitaker was bringing up a further relay of boats, upon which they all faced about and took the remaining works without opposition. When Byng saw that the footing was made good, he sent further reinforcements, and ordered Whitaker to secure himself in his present position. Summonses were now sent to the town both by Byng and the Prince of Hesse; and the Governor, moved, it is said, a good deal by the fact that the English and Dutchmen were between the town and all the women of the best families who were in the chapel, agreed to capitulate the next morning. The articles were accordingly signed, and next day, the 25th of July, the place was delivered up, everyone quitting the town except some twenty families.

Thus fell the great fortress of Gibraltar into our hands, as, in fact, a place naturally in the power of the nation which commands the sea almost entirely surrounding it. It is a place so nearly an island that it cannot be attacked on the land side with much prospect of success; while it cannot be so attacked at all, except in the absence of defending naval force. In a former chapter I have spoken of the attack and capture of Gibraltar chiefly by the ships and the seamen as something unique. The strength of the fortress may be measured by considering that probably 9,000 or 10,000 men were directly employed in the attack, while only about 150 were engaged in the defence.‡ The allied loss was near three times as great as this whole garrison, being 3 officers and 57 men killed, and 8 officers, and 207 men wounded.

It is almost obvious why the attack on Gibraltar should be, as I say, unique. Usually, places to be attacked are defended by fortresses, and landings can be effected with a view to subsequent operations against them. But here it was the fortress itself which

* *Memoirs of Torrington*, p. 142.

† Drinkwater's *History of Gibraltar*, p. 10. Mr. Pocock (see "Journal of the Rev. Thomas Pocock," printed as an appendix to Torrington's Memoirs, p. 123), says the explosion was an accident, one of our own men letting a lighted match fall into the powder.

‡ Entick (p. 645), Drinkwater (p. 10). Torrington's Memoirs (p. 146) say eighty men only, and Burchett confirms this.

had to be attacked, and there was absolutely no other way of doing it.

Strong as the place may have been, it must have fallen into Rooke's hands however strongly it had been garrisoned, had time allowed, and had there been no prospect of relief from the sea. For the fleet covered and protected the force on the isthmus, and that force blockaded the land approaches, while the detached portion of the fleet under Byng was competent to blockade it on the sea side. Cut off from supplies and reinforcements, there was nothing before any garrison but surrender within some definite time, marked by the original store of provisions and munitions. Such a mode of attack could not be undertaken with prospect of success but by the power holding an assured command of the sea; and Gibraltar has defied its foes from that day to this, only because it has never been attacked by any power with such command. When it is so attacked its fall is certain. Over and over again it would have fallen to attacks made upon it had it not been relieved from the sea. Over and over again have the attacks been futile, because they had no assured sea base such as Sir George Rooke considered himself to possess in July 1704.

But probably this base was not quite so secure as Sir George, in full prospect of speedy success, for the moment assumed it to be. That he was fully alive to the general situation is clear from the message the council of war sent to the sovereigns in *esse* and *posse* at Lisbon a month earlier, in answer to their expressed wish for operations on the coast of Andalucia. Attacks, it was said, could not be made without troops, and "the Marines being part of the ships' complements could not be spared at that juncture, when the French fleet were hourly expected upon them."* And Sir George took a precaution which we only hear of in the most incidental way. He detached Admiral Dilkes with a squadron to cruise off Malaga, no doubt with the intention of covering his operations at Gibraltar from any light interruptions, but more in order that he might have the earliest intelligence of any enemy's approach.† But though he recognized the danger, and prepared to take full precautions against it, there can be no doubt

* *Life of Rook*, p. 126.

† I only find this in Mr. Pocock's *Journal*, p. 194, where, on the 24th July, appears the entry, "Admiral Dilks came in hither from cruizing of Malaga." Naval historians so seldom understand where the pith of the narrative lies, that generally the best information comes from such chance statements.

that he was either consciously or unconsciously running a good deal of risk as the attack proceeded. Probably, if he had known that while Byng was warping his ships into place, the Count of Toulouse was preparing to quit Toulon in search of him with 50 sail of the line, the whole attack would have been postponed. As it was, we have seen him weaken his original cover, first by landing his Marines, against what had been his earlier judgment; then by engaging 5 more of his cover ships in the direct attack, and lastly by detaching his boats.

On the other hand, besides the knowledge we have of Rooke's cognizance of the danger and of one at least of his measures of precaution, there are two matters of surmise which it may be proper to take account of. The Admiral probably now knew from Shovel the exact strength of the fleet which he had chased towards Toulon; he might still have thought, as he had done before, that the Toulon squadron was not more than 15 or 16 sail strong. We have seen how troubled Byng was by the smoke of his guns; this almost surely betokens either calm or westerly winds. In neither case could the French fleet have made any rapid approach upon him, and he might easily have relied on the watch which was kept by Dilkes.

Rooke was not long left ignorant of the risks he had run and escaped from. After the capture of Gibraltar, it was considered desirable to keep the fleet in the bay, except such squadrons as it might be necessary to detach for water. And Rooke seems to have thought little of a possible enemy, since he detached 5 Dutch ships for Lisbon and Plymouth, besides making up out of the fleet a garrison of 1,800 men for Gibraltar. Subsequently the whole fleet passed over to Tetuan for water; and then on August 3, 12 ships remaining behind which had not completed their water, the rest stood over to Gibraltar with very light winds. At 6 o'clock on the morning of the 10th one of the scouts came in from the eastward, reporting the enemy in sight. There was considerable discussion as to what was best to be done. There was fear of allowing the 12 ships on the African coast to be cut off, there was also fear of battle with such short complements as the garrisoning of Gibraltar had left on board. Nor were matters mended when the look-out captain, John Herne of the *Centurion*, reported the French fleet to consist of 66 sail, and to be 30 miles to windward. Rooke's fleet was now between Gibraltar and Malaga, 9 miles from the latter place. It was determined to send in at once to Gibraltar

the fire-ships and small vessels to bring back half the Marines, while the fleet, in line of battle, stood towards the African coast to pick up the 12 absent ships, to whom expresses had been sent ordering them to join. Both arrangements succeeded, and after a few days' manœuvring in consequence of the French returning to Malaga after seeing the allied fleet, to pick up their galleys, there was fought the indecisive battle of Malaga, which was a consequence of the capture of Gibraltar, but would probably have prevented it had it occurred a few days earlier. I mention it, not to go farther with any description of the battle here, but to show how the law of a doubtful command of the sea works, and how necessary it must be to pay attention to it in all cases of territorial attack.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea Succeed or Fail—(*continued*).

The protection of Gibraltar from the Lisbon base, 1704–5.—Sir John Leake relieves it three times, capturing attacking ships.—The English and Dutch assume command of the Channel and Mediterranean seas, and the French decline to contest it.—The recovery, based upon the command of the sea, of Barcelona to the Austrian cause, 1705.—Naval views as to the security of that command.—Leake, falling back to Lisbon, leaves Barcelona open to any attack possible within the time necessary for his return.—French invest Barcelona by land and sea.—Leake relieves it, just as he had relieved Gibraltar, by reassuming command of surrounding water, 1706.—The Mediterranean coast of Spain gradually falls under control of the Power commanding the sea.—In the West Indies, St. Christophers and Nevis raided in absence of English naval force, 1705.—Arrival of such force co-incident with cessation of territorial attacks.—Increase of English naval force suggests territorial attacks, but commerce suffers.—Increase of French naval force and check to territorial attack again co-incident.—In Europe, Ostende falls to investment by land and sea; attack by land and sea on Toulon fails, 1707.—Forbin's attempt to invade Scotland checked by naval force.—Minorca falls to Power commanding sea, 1708.—Spanish coast held and supplied from the sea base.—French making head at sea, hope to carry Sardinia by evasion of allied fleet, Sir John Norris drives them back with loss, 1710.—Capture and abandonment of Cette.—Capture of Port Royal, Nova Scotia.—Attack on Antigua prevented by appearance of naval force.—Raid on Monserrat interrupted by rumour of naval force approaching.—Failure of intended attack on Quebec under Sir Hovenden Walker, through wreck, season, and want of supply.—Attacks successful and unsuccessful on Leeward Islands in consequence of distance of naval force at Jamaica.—Duguay-Trouin's capture of Rio Janeiro.—Reflections on these occurrences.

The arrangement come to for the defence of Gibraltar, after the battle of Malaga and in view of the necessary return home of most of the ships, was to land all the Marines except those of two ships that were under-manned, together with 60 gunners and 12 carpenters which the Prince of Hesse, appointed Governor, had asked for. Accordingly "2,000 Marines were landed, and the garrison supplied with a quantity of stores and provisions and 48

cannon, in addition to the 100 there before."* Then all the ships which were found in a condition to remain abroad were placed under the command of Sir John Leake, to form the winter guard of the new conquest.

As Gibraltar produced nothing that was necessary to the fleet, not even water, Leake, with 12 sail and a fire-ship, parted from Rooke off Cape St. Vincent in order to make Lisbon his head-quarters, and his action in protecting Gibraltar even from that distant base is not a little striking and instructive.

The French and Spanish naturally determined to make strenuous efforts for the recovery of Gibraltar, and it seems by no means impossible that they might have succeeded had the efforts been great enough and carried out in the proper direction. Sir John Leake, greatly put to it to procure at Lisbon the necessaries for his ships, heard, on the 1st October, that Gibraltar was invested by land, and later he learnt that a squadron of 19 of the enemy's ships, great and small, had come into the bay, and that the intention evidently was to invest the place by land and sea.†

The squadron was that of M. de Pointis, with 13 sail of the line,‡ but so badly provided that he was no sooner arrived than he found it necessary to go to Cadiz for supplies.

Sir John Leake, while hastening all preparations, received advice from the Prince of Hesse that de Pointis had landed 6 battalions and gone to the westward, leaving only 6 frigates of from 40 to 20 guns in the bay, and that the trenches had been opened on October 11th. Leake in council, determined to proceed at once to the relief of the Prince with his squadron, which now consisted of 14 English and 6 Dutch sail of the line. The fleet arrived at Gibraltar without adventure, and apparently found no force there. Leake landed some reinforcements, but upon receipt of intelligence—without any basis of truth that I can discover—of the approach of a superior French force, and being still unsupplied with necessaries, he re-embarked the men landed except the gunners, carpenters, and marines, and made sail again for Lisbon.

De Pointis on his side was being urged to re-establish the blockade, but was pressing the danger of his situation at Gibraltar in the presence of "30 sail" in the Tagus, and recommending that he should remain at Cadiz, where he was not only secure but in a

* *Memoirs of Lord Torrington*, p. 164.

† Entick, p. 649.

‡ Troude, vol. i., p. 256.

position to harass any convoys for Gibraltar, until he was reinforced.* The French Government seems to have had but little conception of the strategy of the situation, and not to have understood that Gibraltar could never fall unless Leake were masked or beaten. De Pointis, however, managed to remain safe at or near Cadiz with his main force, while leaving a few frigates and small vessels to watch Gibraltar and check its supply by sea.

Leake was ready, and got out of the Tagus on the 25th of October, and four days later he appeared in the bay of Gibraltar with such little warning that he captured the whole of the enemy's light squadron, consisting of 3 frigates, a sloop, a fire-ship, a store-ship full of ammunition, and other small vessels. The statement is that his arrival was most critical, as the enemy had intended to storm the fortress that very night, having prepared boats from Cadiz to land 3,000 men upon the New Mole.† Sir John now remained at Gibraltar, and landed such men and stores as the fleet could spare. Towards the latter end of November he had intelligence that de Pointis was at sea, and he himself put to sea, keeping sight of Gibraltar in order to be in a position to receive him. On the 17th and 19th of December two convoys, one of 9 and the other of 7 transports, arrived, having on board 1,970 men, and no doubt stores for the garrison of Gibraltar.‡ On the 21st December a Council of War decided that it was quite safe for the allied fleet to go back to Lisbon to refit, as, beside the good condition Gibraltar garrison was now in, it was known that the besiegers were themselves suffering the greatest distress and privation. Leake was therefore back at Lisbon by January 19th, 1705.

Further supplies and reinforcements arrived at Gibraltar during the month of January, and the French Government, disregarding de Pointis' arguments, ordered him back to re-establish the blockade. He sailed during the early days of March 1705, but had hardly reached Gibraltar when his ships were dispersed by a gale; 8 were driven to sea, and he himself, with 5 sail of the line only, found his way to the anchorage.§ News that de Pointis, with

* Troude, vol. i., p. 256.

† The Prince of Hesse wrote that he did not think he could have held out against such an attack.—Hervey, vol. iii., p. 468.

‡ The last convoy, off Cape Spartel, nearly ran into the toils of M. de Pointis' fleet of 22 sail, which as a ruse had hoisted English and Dutch colours; as it was, 1 transport was captured, and 3 more with 2 war-ships as convoy, were forced back to Lisbon.

§ Troude, vol. i., p. 256.

14 sail, had arrived at Gibraltar, reached Leake at Lisbon, who sailed thence on the 16th of March at the head of 23 sail—English, Dutch, and Portuguese—having on board an English, a Dutch, and a Portuguese regiment. At half-past 5 on the morning of the 20th of March, de Pointis' ships were seen from the fleet to be working out of the bay of Gibraltar. Sir Thomas Dilkes was detached to attack them, and the whole were speedily either captured or destroyed. Sir John Leake supposing that the remainder of the French squadron might have made for Malaga, proceeded thither after it, but learnt that the ships, on hearing the firing in Gibraltar Bay, had beat a speedy retreat to Toulon. Marshal de Tessé, who was in command of the besieging land forces, upon this wrote to the French King that it was impossible to continue the siege, and it was raised on the 1st of April 1705, after having lasted five months.

We may clearly say of this failure of the attacking, and success of the defending, force, that both were centred on the proceedings of Sir John Leake. Just as it was not the force actually engaged which had wrested the great stronghold from the Spanish, but the covering and sustaining force of Sir George Rooke, so it was not the defenders of the works, however gallant and enduring, who held them. It was the unmatched threat of Sir John Leake at Lisbon which would have operated to prevent the waste and disappointment incurred by the French had they only understood its nature, and which, being foolishly dared, passed beyond the threatening stage and rolled over everything in its way. Just as Admiral de Pointis foresaw failure from a breach of the rules of naval war, so we may be sure that Sir George Rooke based his hopes of success when he attacked, in a consciousness that he had force enough, apart from what was immediately engaged, to defy the enemy should he make his appearance from the sea.

The operations of Sir Cloudesley Shovel and the Earl of Peterborough on the coast of Spain in 1705, although they were carried on against a territory which was at least in part friendly, are yet in some degree illustrative of the influences that are exercised by the neighbourhood of a possibly opposing fleet. Though the battle of Malaga had been a drawn battle, and might, according to the judgment of contemporaries, have turned against the Allies had it been renewed by the French,* yet it had by no means given confidence to our enemies or tended to make them less cautious in

* Burchett, p. 680.

attacking. They had, indeed, left the battle-field in the hands of Sir George Rooke, and by so much acknowledged his superiority at sea.

The fact was doubtless recognized on both sides; in stimulating the Allies to farther operations, which pre-supposed a command of the sea, yet not such assured command as would dispense with any precaution; and in pressing on France the necessity of recovering her maritime position.

On the French side, fleets were fitted out at Brest and Toulon, and a formidable *guerre de course* under Forbin was initiated at Dunkirk. On the English side, in addition to the great attacking and covering force destined for the Mediterranean under the Earl of Peterborough and Sir Cloudesley Shovel, defending forces were placed under Sir George Byng for Brest, and Sir Thomas Dilkes for Dunkirk.*

By the middle of June 1705, Sir Cloudesley Shovel found himself at Lisbon at the head of a fleet of 58 sail of the line, of which 38 were English and 20 were Dutch, besides frigates, fire-ships, bomb-vessels, and the other usual acccompaniments of a great fleet.

The French Brest fleet was at this time supposed to consist of about 18 sail of the line, and the force, under Sir George Byng, left to watch it amounted to 12 sail of the line. His orders were to cruise off Ushant, and if he found that the enemy had sailed, he was, when assured that they were not bound up Channel, to detach Sir John Jennings with the ships intended for the main fleet. If Sir Cloudesley Shovel had no direct intelligence as to the strength of the Toulon fleet, he would have estimated it by remembering that the full French fleet of the year before had come up to 49 of the line and had been diminished by the loss of De Pointis' 5 sail, though possibly increased by subsequent additions.

As soon as the fleet assembled at Lisbon, although the land forces were not yet fully collected, a council of war was held to consider the situation, the chief point of which was the possibility of a junction between the Brest and the Toulon fleets.† The first decision come to was to detach 46 or 48 ships to cruise between Cape Spartel and Cadiz, to interpose between the Brest and Toulon fleets and prevent their junction. On the 20th of June, however, this decision was reversed, and "it was agreed not to be advisable

* Dilkes, however, came on with the grand fleet to Lisbon.

† Peterborough and Shovel were in commission jointly as admirals. Burchett, p. 684.

to detach any ships, in regard the fleet was proceeding on action, and that there was a probability of the junction of the enemy's ships of the ocean and Mediterranean."*

Leaving the Earl of Peterborough to await the completion of his army by the arrival of transports expected from Ireland, and by hoped-for additions from Portugal, Shovel with the main part of the fleet sailed from Lisbon on June 22nd, a measure which must have had for its object the covering and protecting the expedition which was to follow. The intention was to cruise off Cape Spartel as determined by the first council of war, until the Earl of Peterborough should join with his army.†

Peterborough followed on July 17th; his army amounted to about 12,000 men, and the whole expedition being united at Gibraltar, sailed thence on the 5th August and anchored in Altea Bay on the 11th.

A determination was then come to, to endeavour to recover Barcelona to the Austrian cause, it being held for the Bourbons. The fleet was before the place on the 12th of August. On the 13th the troops were landed without opposition, a couple of miles from the town. But as the attack proceeded, the generals feared it might prove beyond the strength of the army.

On the 5th September the generals, at the Archduke Charles's request, resolved to persevere in the attack, at any rate for a time; but on the 7th the Earl of Peterborough was for giving the thing up and re-embarking, and the council supported him, alleging "that they had not been assisted *either by the fleet* or by the country people as they expected; that the King (Charles) was uncertain in his resolutions—one day for a siege, one day for a march; and that the deputies of Catalonia had told my Lord Peterborough their people could not work where they were exposed to the enemy's fire."‡

What had occurred in the meantime is well worth our attention. Peterborough was admiral as well as general, and Shovel, with his fleet, was under his orders. The generals, in their council of the 5th September, had relied upon the landing of a number of seamen and marines from the fleet, which Peterborough, as

* Burchett, p. 685.

† Byng had before this quitted Ushant and joined the main fleet. I have not been able to discover why.

‡ *The History of the Last War in Spain, from 1702 to 1710.* 1726. Page 25. This book, sometimes quoted as *An Impartial Inquiry into the Management of the War in Spain,* is written against Lord Peterborough, but it has the advantage of containing the letters that passed between the various authorities.

admiral, could certainly order. The actual demand made on the fleet was for "1,500 men to be upon duty, and work in opening the trenches every day, as also to ply the cannon on the battery of 52 guns, besides the 1,100 marines of the complement of the fleet that are already in the camp."*

When the request reached Sir Cloudesley Shovel, he called a council of war on board his flag-ship, the *Britannia*, and sent a request to Peterborough to attend it. Peterborough did not come on board then, but he seems to have gone to Shovel immediately after the council of land officers held the day before. Now he sent to the flag-officers' council his opinion that the demand "was more than could be expected, or that, perhaps, he could have agreed to in his private opinion."† This difference in opinion between the admiral and the general in the same person has been thrown in Peterborough's teeth as double dealing; but it is at least possible that when he voted with the land council he was not actually aware how completely the Toulon fleet was governing the whole transaction, and that when he consulted Shovel he was convinced of the mistake he had made. That there was abundance of friction between the land and sea officers is plain enough, and the council of flag-officers marked it by a stinging record of the Earl's absence—"The Earl of Peterborough not thinking fit to afford us his company at this great council."

But the flag-officers, left to themselves in this way, and knowing that if there were a failure it would be charged against the fleet by those who would never understand the strategical conditions, yielded almost the whole demand. They said:—

> We do agree to send out of Her Majesty's ships five and twenty hundred men, armed, including those belonging to the fleet already ashore, which will reduce the fleet under their middle complement, besides the misfortune of the sick men of the fleet.
>
> And the Dutch flag-officers agree, on behalf of the States-General's fleet, to assist the service at land with six hundred men, armed.
>
> The fleet not being in a condition to assist with sails to make lodgments, all the Flags do desire the men may have houses or tents to lodge or shelter themselves in.
>
> Upon any notice we have of the enemy's being at sea, and approaching towards us, we desire both seamen and marines may be in a readiness to embark when sent for. And we further desire that immediate notice may be sent when it is designed the men and guns should be landed, that the first opportunity of good weather may be taken for landing the latter.‡

Before any of these men and stores were landed, the army, by

* Minute of the Council of Flag Officers of August 27th (o.s.), at p. 30, *History of the Last War, &c.*

† *Ibid.*, p. 32.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

an inspiration of the Prince of Hesse, who knew the localities well, made a successful attack on one of the works, which proved to be the key of the position. Shovel did all that he promised, and more, and between the renewed vigour of the soldiers and seamen with the guns and ammunition of the fleet on shore, and a bombardment from the sea, carried out by the bomb-vessels and a few of the ships themselves, the place was put to such straits that the adherents of Charles rose upon the Governor, and Barcelona surrendered on the 3rd October 1705.

The ordinary historians of these occurrences seem none of them aware that it was governed by the circumstances and attitude of the French fleet at Toulon. Even although it is plain from the minute of the council of the 6th September, quoted above, that the flag-officers' minds were full of regard to the Toulon fleet, yet even Sir Cloudesley Shovel, in the accounts he sent home to the Lord High Admiral, does not think it necessary to advert further to the subject. I neither learn what knowledge the flag-officers had of the number and state of the French fleet, nor what precautions were taken to watch it and guard against surprise. That the Allies were in command of the sea is clear; that the flag-officers at least were aware of the tenure by which they held it is equally clear, from their own language. We cannot doubt but that full precautions were taken in view of all the circumstances of the moment, even as we have seen them in Rooke's case at Gibraltar, though they are not directly alluded to.

Not impossibly, Shovel had news of Toulon, and was aware that so far from preparing to contest the command of the sea, the French were in desperate fear of being attacked in Toulon itself, and were busily employed in preparing to defend themselves there.* And it was not until too late, that any attempt whatever was made to equip a squadron, and then the key was pitched no higher than 32 sail of the line.

After the surrender of Barcelona, Peterborough and the army remained with the Archduke Charles in occupation of Catalonia. Sir John Leake was left with a strong squadron in the Mediter-

* "Le bruit ayant couru que l'ennemi se disposait à attaquer Toulon, il fut ordonné à M. de Vauvré, intendant, d'établir de nouvelles batteries dans tous les endroits où il les jugerait necessaires, de les bien garnir de munitions, de retenir les vaisseau armés dans les darses, et de se concerter avec le commandant du port et celui de terre pour faire une vigoureuse défense. M. le Comte de Toulouse y fut envoyé pour y commander; le roi lui donna six bataillons de troupes réglées et deux régiments de dragons pour s'opposer aux ennemis en cas de descente."—*Histoire de la Marine Française*, par Eugene Sue. 1845. Vol. iv., p. 443.

ranean, but with no nearer port of supply than Lisbon, while Sir Cloudesley Shovel, with the main body of the fleet, returned to England for the winter.

How completely all the operations at Barcelona were subordinate to sea command, we may be convinced as we proceed with the history. Leake had to fall back to Lisbon for supplies, and when he was there in the middle of February 1706, he had but 10 English and 6 Dutch ships under his command. In March Marshal de Tessé was before Barcelona with a considerable army.* It was furnished and supplied from the sea, and the Count of Toulouse was anchored off the place with 20 sail.

Leake was reinforced from England on April 3rd by 6 English and 6 Dutch sail of the line, and with this increased force it was deemed possible to relieve Barcelona. By the 18th of April the Admiral was once more in Altea Bay, and there he was joined by heavy reinforcements under Sir George Byng and Commodore Walker. The Allies had now a fleet of 53 sail of the line and 6 frigates, and pressing messages arriving from the Archduke Charles simultaneously with a fresh southerly breeze, the fleet made sail for Barcelona.

> The place [says de Lapeyrouse Bonfils], reduced to extremity, was on the point of surrendering when the allied fleet of 45 sail arrived before it on the 7th May. The Count of Toulouse, too weak for battle, fled precipitately; then Marshal de Tessé raised the siege in disorder, abandoning his artillery and wounded. The Spanish army, demoralized, broke up, and Catalonia passed once more under the rule of the Archduke. A battle lost could not have been followed by more deplorable results.†

Barcelona is, in fact, only the history of the Gibraltar affair over again, and Sir John Leake was pretty well versed in the mode of proceeding. Both places were attacked by portions of the fleet only; in both cases, the prospects of success induced the Admirals to go perhaps farther than it was wholly prudent to go in weakening the covering fleet which alone enabled the enterprise to be undertaken, by the command of the sea which it secured. Both places fell before the joint attack. The enemy, taking advantage of the temporary absence of the covering fleet, attempted to recover each place by a land and sea investment and siege. Sir John Leake in both cases arrived and drove the sea force away, which in both cases necessitated the break up of the land attack.

* Forty thousand men according to de Lapeyrouse Bonfils (vol. ii., p. 66).

† *Hist. de la Mar. Française*, vol. ii., p. 66. Sir John Leake, in his report to the Lord High Admiral, says the Count of Toulouse made off the night before he arrived.

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Sir John Leake was now left in assured command of the Mediterranean Sea, and we find him proceeding to work systematically and almost leisurely, assisted by the Earl of Peterborough and the troops, to carry every place which could be conveniently got at from the sea. The Earl and the troops were first embarked from Catalonia and landed on the shores of Valencia. Then, learning that a show of force would bring about the surrender of Cartagena, he proceeded thither on the 1st June and accepted the declaration of the place in favour of Charles, placing in it a garrison of marines. On the 7th June the fleet went to water at Altea, and on the 26th it was before Alicante. Here was a strong garrison, disposed to hold out, so that, the fleet not having with it a sufficient land force to undertake the attack, a delay occurred till the 21st and 22nd of July, when the marines left on board, with 800 seamen, were landed, and joined a body of Spanish troops. The same night the town was bombarded by some of the ships. On July 24th the marines which had been in garrison at Cartagena arrived, and then these being landed with 40 more seamen from each ship, Alicante was carried by storm.

On September 9th the island of Iviza surrendered to Sir John, and on the 14th Palma, after a show of resistance, followed the example of Iviza, and brought the whole island of Majorca in its train.

These conquests being completed, Sir John Leake, pursuant to his orders, withdrew from the Mediterranean with the whole fleet for the winter months. He himself now went home with part of the fleet, but Sir George Byng was detached to Lisbon with 17 sail of the line and some smaller vessels, in order to carry out the service of guarding the coasts and assisting the Earl of Peterborough, as Leake himself had acted in the preceding winters.

Passing back to the West Indies, and to the year 1705, it does not appear that we had any naval force there in the early part of it. In the months of March and April the French, taking advantage of what was either an indifferent or a commanded sea, proceeded with a small squadron under the Count de Chavagnac, and, with forces collected by M. Herville, the Governor of San Domingo, made a raiding attack on St. Christophers. They carried off plunder, it is said, to the amount of £150,000; but the garrison retreating into the fort remained masters of it, and the French retired to attack Nevis. Here they were even more successful, as they raided the island and also held it to heavy ransom. There

is no mention of any British naval force in the vicinity, and so the French appear to have had it, as usual in such cases, all their own way.

It was not till May 7th that Sir William Whetstone, with a squadron, arrived at Jamaica and thus disputed command of the sea with the French. Coincidently, the character of the war changed. Nothing is heard of territorial attacks, and both sides appeared to devote themselves to the attack and defence of commerce, as well as to direct attack upon the war-ships. But towards the latter end of July Whetstone was reinforced by a squadron under Captain Kerr, and then the idea was entertained of exhibiting such force before Cartagena as might induce the Governor to declare for the Austrian Archduke. A demonstration was accordingly made there, but the Governor declined to change his allegiance, and there was not force enough to make any attack practicable, even if it had been considered safe to risk the fighting power of the squadron.

Whetstone left Kerr in command, and himself sailed for England at the end of December; and Kerr thereupon, instead of directing his energies to commerce attack and defence, began to have ideas of descents upon the coast of Hispaniola, yet more upon the shipping probably to be found in the ports than on the ports themselves. Everything in this direction miscarried in one way or another, and the merchants were so dissatisfied with the protection afforded to their trade by the Commodore, that they pushed their complaints against him into the House of Commons, where they gained such weight that Kerr was never again employed.

The whole of 1706 passed in this way. If there was French naval force in the West Indies, it had no command; and nothing is stated of it beyond the successful attacks on commerce above referred to.

In Europe there were made two attacks on ports, in the years 1706 and 1707, which may be noticed merely to point out how they differed from the class of attacks properly under discussion in these chapters. The one was an attack on Ostende in June 1706, which place being invested by the allied troops on land, and blockaded and bombarded by a British squadron under Sir Stafford Fairborne, surrendered. The other was a similar attack on Toulon in August 1707. The port was invested on land by the forces of the Duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene, which were covered and assisted on their march thither by the large fleet under Sir Cloudesley Shovel. The investment by land, however, appears to

have been very far from complete, and after a vigorous sally from the garrison, which inflicted great loss on the attacking forces, it was determined to raise the siege, on the ostensible ground that the strength of the garrison would increase, while there were no hopes of reinforcement for the allied armies. Political and personal reasons were also stated to have had an effect in reducing the operations to failure.

Though in neither of these cases could the attacks have been contemplated, unless the attacking power were assured of freedom from apprehension as far as the sea was concerned, yet they were not properly attacks from the sea, as the troops marched by land, and drew their supplies also from land.

In 1706 an allied descent on the north coast of France was in contemplation, in order to assist the Protestants in insurrection; but a long continuance of foul winds ultimately caused the abandonment of the idea.

In March 1707 Commodore Wager, with 7 sail of the line, sailed for the West Indies, to relieve Commodore Kerr. It was not known what force the French might have in those waters, and the dispositions of the British ships show merely a defensive attitude; but in December, precise information of the arrival of du Casse, with 10 sail of the line, and other forces to follow, caused Wager to apprehend the possibility of an attack on Jamaica, and drew him thither in concentrated force, which may or may not have caused the abandonment of the design. At any rate, no attack was made.

In the beginning of 1708, an occurrence took place highly illustrative of the conditions which are necessary to success in attacks upon territory over sea. I have already observed that the weaker Power may often carry out successful expeditions over sea, for the attack of territory, where the naval part of the undertaking is complete when the troops are landed. At the time when our fleet was engaged in the siege of Toulon, the French were operating in our rear, as it were, by means of small groups of ships acting, as Entick puts it, "by stealth," and in this way Minorca had been relieved by them. Scotland, presumably ready to rise and welcome any body of French troops landed in support of the Pretender, offered just the sort of opportunity for a success of this kind, yet, of course, with the risk of failure if knowledge of the design should reach the English Government soon enough to enable them to detach a small force to frustrate it.

In order to take advantage of the position, the French pro-

ceeded to fit out an expedition 20 sail strong, under the Count de Forbin, with a numerous body of troops. Certainly a month before it was ready to sail the English Government had intelligence of it, and by the 12th March ample force was assembled, Sir George Byng being in the Downs with the main part of it. The winds and weather so favoured the French that they were able to put to sea on the 17th March, at a time when Byng was driven to the Downs by adverse weather. On the 19th, being back again on the French coast, he learnt the departure of the enemy, but could only guess that their destination was Scotland. He therefore divided his force, leaving Rear-Admiral Baker with a division in the Downs, while he himself made all sail for Edinburgh. He anchored in the Firth of Forth at night on the 23rd, and in the morning saw the object of his pursuit flying to the north-eastward as fast as the wind would carry him. Forbin had anchored before Byng arrived, and had been made aware of the pursuit which was on his heels, as well as of the fact that his plans were known and thoroughly prepared against by the English. He had observed the anchoring of Byng's squadron, only too happy to know that he was himself unobserved, and had immediately sent round to the ships to put all their lights out and make off to sea without a moment's delay. Byng chased them, but only managed to capture one ship, the *Salisbury*, and Forbin got the rest of his squadron safe back into Dunkirk.

The incident simply shows how precarious the success of any expedition by sea must be when it depends, not on its strength, but upon the chances that the enemy may not have intelligence, or may, in some way, be unprepared to employ a sufficient naval force in time. Doubtless the thing may be done in cases, but they must be rare, and the risks of failure are so great as generally to stigmatise such attempts as mere acts of rashness.

In October 1708 Minorca fell to the attack of an army commanded by Lieut.-General Stanhope, when supported and supplied by a fleet, under Sir John Leake, in command of the surrounding waters, acting on the knowledge that the French fleet was in no condition to interfere.

Returning to the West Indies, we find the rule of naval war, which may be said to have now become fundamental, in full force. Du Casse was in command of a squadron estimated to be double the strength of that commanded by Commodore Wager, and not only does he abstain from all idea of territorial attack, but he, though certainly one of the most able and energetic officers

in the French navy, seems to have devoted himself wholly to commerce defence. His true objective was Wager's squadron, but it is not always that the true objective is seen. In this case, Commodore Wager used his powers of evasion in a legitimate way, not necessarily hazardous. He intercepted the Spanish galleons in the absence of du Casse's protecting fleet, and made a great prize.

The only point noteworthy in the naval history of Europe in 1709, in connection with the subject of this chapter, is the way in which the towns along the Spanish coast, which, in the collapse of the Austrian cause in Spain, had come to be invested on the land side, were kept alive for a time by resting on the sea base to which stores and provisions arrived from all parts of the Mediterranean. The chief services of Sir George Byng and Sir Edward Whittaker may be said to have been, on the one hand, the supply of the Spanish coast, and on the other, the prevention of interference with it by the French over sea.

In 1710 Sir John Norris became Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and on his arrival with the spring fleet in March 13th at Port Mahon, he learnt that the French had been making such head at sea while the English fleet was, so to speak, in winter quarters, that they had captured the *Pembroke*, 64, and the *Falcon*, 32. To a certain extent, therefore, and for the first time since the battle of Malaga, there was a tendency—it was not more—to a disputed command of the sea.*

Such as it was, the French, still untaught by all that had gone on, considered the territorial attacks might be renewed on their side, if not with impunity, at least with a minimum of risk. When Norris, on the 7th of April, arrived at Barcelona with the squadron under his immediate command, he learnt that the enemy had a project in preparation for an attack on Sardinia, with 20 galleys, 5 ships, and other small vessels, carrying with them some 3,500 men. Norris immediately set himself to prevent the success of this expedition, and sailed for that purpose with 10 line-of-battle ships and 2 regiments. He proceeded first to Bastia in

* That no apprehensions were entertained by the English, may be gathered from the very scattered state of the 23 sail of the line which are stated to have been under Norris's command when he left Port Mahon for Barcelona. Two were on their way to Lisbon to clean, refit, and return; 2 were convoying corn from Oran to Spain; 9 were convoying corn from the Archipelago; 2 were watching the Straights of Messina; 1 was watching Sardinia; 2 were on a mission to Genoa; and only 6 were with Sir John Norris. But I think that some Dutch ships at Barcelona are left out of this account. (*See* Entick, p. 686, note.)

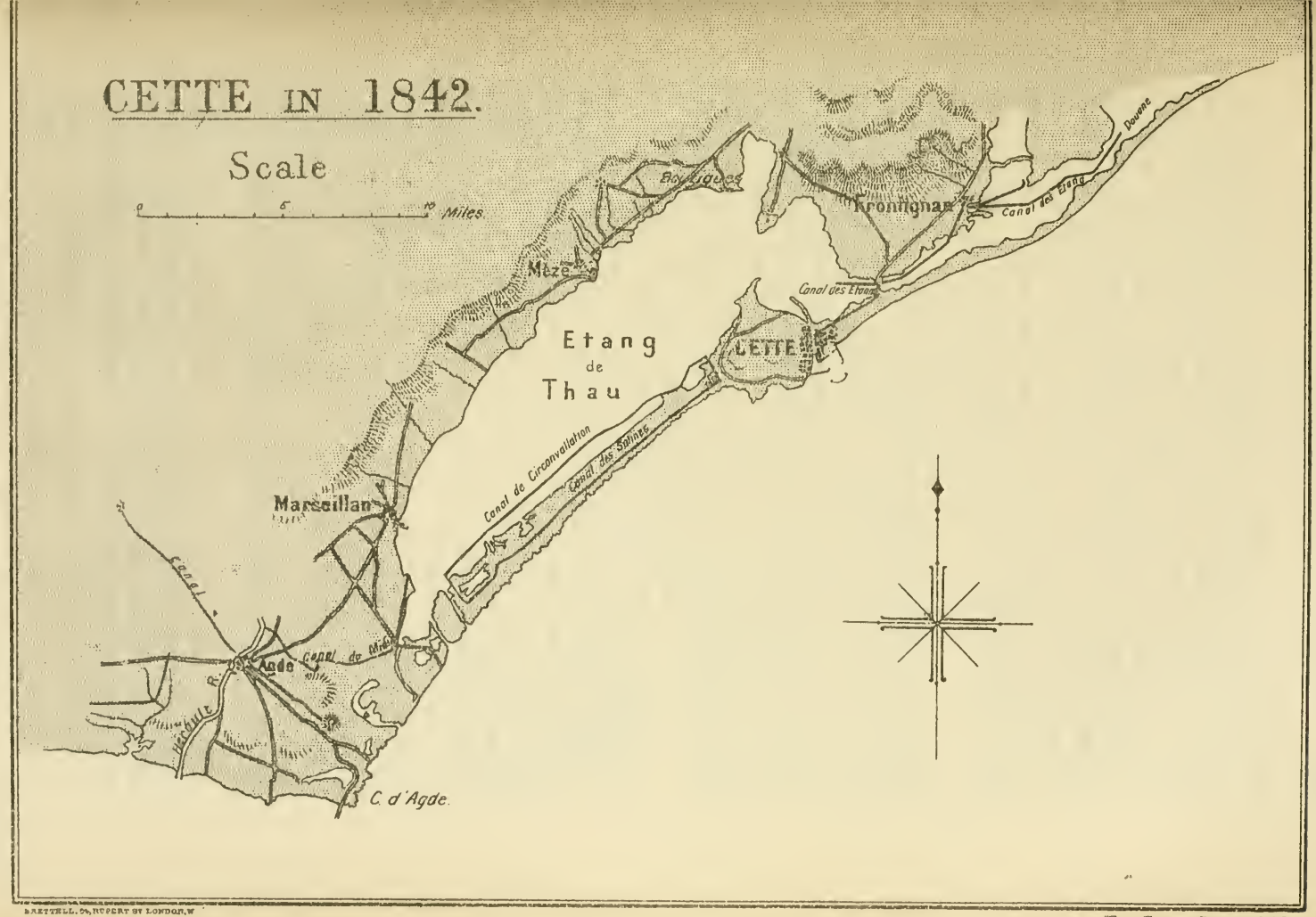
Corsica, and then to Terra Nuova on the N.E. coast of Sardinia. Here he found some tartans, which had just landed between 400 and 500 troops who had taken the town. But the capture of the tartans, and the landing of some troops under General Brown, compelled the surrender at discretion of the whole of the enemy's forces.

There being no intelligence of any further attempts on the east side of the island, and reports reaching Norris that the Duke of Fursis was conducting the main attack on the west side of the island, he made his way through the Straits of Bonifacio. There, on the 8th of June, he got intelligence of the inevitable action of *rule* in naval warfare. It was impossible for the French to continue their design, under the threat of the superior sea force of Norris. The Duke of Fursis had retired to Ajaccio, seeking as he supposed and hoped, the shelter of a neutral port.* Not being so sure of his ground, the Duke himself fled away back to France with his galleys, leaving some of his troops in 8 large transports, with the greater part of his artillery, ammunition, and provisions. Norris fell upon and destroyed them, and thus at once ended all ideas of attack on Sardinia, and added another page to the chapter of naval strategy, which teaches the hazard, at least, of all attempts to attack territory over an uncommanded sea.

Immediately after this came a further illustration of the dogma that, even over a commanded sea, it is no use attacking territory with insufficient land force; and that, generally speaking, reliance on effective co-operation from the inhabitants of an invaded country is not very safe. The inhabitants of the Cevennes were then in insurrection against the king of France, and were in arms as far south as to be within 50 miles of the town of Cette. The idea of the Allies was that, if this place could be captured and held, communications might be established with the rebels, and something like a permanent footing established in France itself. To be successful in an undertaking of this character, it is obvious that considerable land force in the first instance, and a full provision for its reinforcement and supply in the second, was absolutely necessary. To attempt it, as was done, with only 700 men and no preparation for reinforcement, was at the best but rash.

Cette is a little town on the French coast, midway between Marseilles and the Spanish frontier. It stands at the foot of a hill which is itself almost an island, being connected with the mainland only by a beach stretching to the N.E. and S.W., and

* Corsica then belonged to the Republic of Genoa.



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forming the coast line. Within this beach and cutting it off from the land for six or seven miles to the southward, and for three or four miles to the northward, is a sheet of water which is several fathoms deep where it immediately surrounds the hill of Cette. Without long-range artillery Cette cannot be attacked but by approach along these causeways or beaches, and it was therefore a place naturally strong, so long as it could be supplied from the sea, which a little harbour facilitated. But just as it was a place easily held on a sea base, because of the difficulty of approach on the land side, it was by so much a bad place from which to open up communications with the Cevennes.

The fleet got before Cette on the 19th of July, and at once landed upon the beach the 700 troops and some marines provided, without difficulty or opposition. The first thing next morning they marched upon the town, and, assisted by the fire from some of the ships, possessed themselves of it. The next day they took possession of the town and bridge of Agde, ten miles to the S.W., which formed the key of the position in that direction, as apparently the long causeway could not be reached but by the bridge, or by fording the shallow or south-western part of the lake, to which there was communication from the sea.

On the 17th Major-General Seissan, who was in command of the troops, received intelligence that the Duke de Roquelaure was advancing from Mèze with 400 Dragoons and 2,000 Militia to cross the shallow part of the lake. The General sent 140 men to secure the bridge of Agde, and at the same time a message to the Admiral to send boats into the lake. These precautions caused the French to return to Mèze, but word was soon brought that on a false alarm the detachment guarding the bridge had abandoned it. Then, too, it became known that the forces approaching by way of Agde were considerable,* and there was nothing for it but to fall back on Cette. But this was to leave the place open, and accordingly the enemy pressed on so that it was impossible to hold it, and the troops were embarked, with the loss of their rear-guard, and all hopes of combining with the inhabitants of the Cevennes collapsed.

There being no naval force to hinder it, a sufficient squadron under Captain Martin proceeded to Boston in the summer of 1709, for the purpose of organizing there an attack against Port Royal, now Annapolis, in Nova Scotia. Two thousand land forces were em-

* Said to be 2,000 horse, each with a foot soldier behind him. Lediard, vol. ii., p. 846

barked in transports, with full supplies and munitions, and the expedition came to an anchor at the entrance of Port Royal harbour on September 24th. Careful arrangements resulted in the landing of the troops, with guns and all proper appliances. The single mortar vessel belonging to the expedition proceeded to play heavily and continuously on the fort, which was at the same time bombarded from the batteries erected on shore. The result was that on the 1st October the Governor sent to propose terms of capitulation, which were accepted, and this part of Nova Scotia passed thus easily into our hands. The historians reasonably credit the naval and military commanders with complete agreement and co-operation, and we may point to it as conveying the simple lesson already several times stated, that a land and sea attack properly conducted against a place which is not relieved by sea ought generally to succeed.

In the West Indies, in 1710, the attack and defence of commerce entirely occupied the minds of the authorities carrying on the war, and in 1711 the presence of du Casse on the French side, and of Commodore Littleton on the other, kept territory as it were neutral, and fixed attention on the English side to the capture, and on the French side to the defence, of the annual fleet of the Spanish treasure ships.

But in the Leeward Islands the French hoped to take advantage of the fact that the mass of the English force was away far to leeward at Jamaica, and that there were only one or two cruisers to prevent any attacks being made on the British Islands. They proposed to treat the water strategically as an indifferent sea, forgetting that if there was any naval force they must be prepared to meet and beat it before they could hope for success ; and that an indifferent sea did not mean a sea where the naval forces engaged were small, but where there was no naval force whatever, properly so called. The design was against the Island of Antigua, and a force of 2,000 land troops was prepared at Martinique. The naval force to convoy it was insignificant, and for the most part extemporised. The expedition sailed from Martinique on the 10th June, but was scarcely clear of the island when one of the few British cruisers available, the *Newcastle*, fell upon it, broke it up and dispersed it so that the vessels were only too glad to seek the shelter of their own harbours.

Untaught by this mishap, the French still hoped to do something on a smaller scale ; and after a few days later succeeded in slipping some 1,500 men by night into the Island of Monserrat.

There, for a moment, they proceeded to plunder, but before the day was over, intelligence of the probable arrival of the *Newcastle* caused their hurried re-embarkation, so hurried that they left some of their men behind them. Nor did they then wholly escape, for on their way back to their own island they were met by the British cruisers *Diamond* and *Panther*, which made several prizes amongst them.

These attacks, where the force employed is small, where the distance to be passed over sea is short, and where, if a successful landing is effected, capture of the whole territory may follow, constitute perhaps the limits within which there is any chance at all of a successful attack on territory by the inferior naval force. But attacks on territory of any kind are such serious affairs that the best-arranged sometimes fail from various causes, which could not have been foreseen, even when the expedition is conducted over a sea absolutely undefended.

Such an example we have in the intended attack on Quebec in 1711. The forces both land and sea for this expedition, which left St. Helens for America on the 11th April 1711, were on a not inconsiderable scale, and consisted of 11 sail of the line, with other vessels under Rear-Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker, and 31 transports carrying 5,300 troops under Brigadier-General Hill. It was expected that large reinforcements would be drawn from Boston, whither the fleet proceeded in the first instance, but "the Admiral was far from meeting in New England with that hearty zeal for the service which he expected," * and in the end the expedition did not sail for the St. Lawrence until the 30th July, and then with pilots on board who only professed their ignorance of the navigation before them.

Sir Hovenden Walker's inquiries as to the conduct of the business in hand were not encouraging. The navigation of the St. Lawrence was represented to be so dangerous that he held it impossible to take 80-gun ships up, and felt himself obliged to send two of these home, shifting his flag from one of them into a 70-gun ship, the *Edgar*. He had also intelligence of the probable arrival of a French ship of 60 guns, and another of 30; and though such a force could not attempt anything as against his own, yet he ordered the two 80-gun ships to cruise for a month at the mouth of the St. Lawrence before they went home, in order that he might not be interfered with.

Walker did not reach Gaspé Bay until August 18th, where he

* Entick, p. 692.

anchored to wait for a fair wind. On the 20th he sailed, but next day fell into a thick fog in the evening, accompanied with strong winds from E. and E.S.E. In this dangerous position, probably in the open water above Anticosti Island, the fleet was brought-to with their heads to the southward. Had they kept so till morning, very possibly the subsequent disaster might have been avoided. But about half-past 10 at night it was assumed that the south shore was seen, and the fleet was ordered to wear and bring-to with their heads to the northward. "What men will do, not knowing what they do," at sea, is not ill-exemplified when we learn that Sir Hovenden Walker, with this great fleet under his charge, in a fog, with pilots he did not trust, and fully impressed with all the dangers of the situation, was going comfortably to bed as soon as the fleet was brought to. It was one of the soldiers—a Captain Goddard—who, with sharper eyes than the sailors, and a mind probably free from foregone conclusions, saved the whole fleet from destruction. As they were wearing, he was certain he saw breakers stretching away to leeward. At first he was not listened to, but becoming more certain and more importunate, "he penetrated to the Admiral's cabin," and made him come on deck—even in his dressing-gown and slippers. Then, indeed, it was seen that the whole fleet was standing on to the north shore, and was even then amongst the breakers. It speaks well for the subsequent energy and seamanship that only 8 transports were lost. They carried 1,383 men, of whom only 499 were saved.*

This disaster not only made delay in an undertaking already long behind its time, but it broke any spirit that may have existed amongst the officers and pilots previously. It was unanimously concluded that the St. Lawrence was barred to the fleet because of its dangers, and the ships were ordered to rendezvous in Spanish River Bay in Cape Breton. There were other considerations which possibly had equal weight. The supplies of the fleet were by this time exceedingly limited. There were only provisions for ten weeks on short allowance, and the bread would not last out even as far as that. There was indeed some apprehension that if the fleet did get up to Quebec, it might find the place deserted and void of supplies of any sort, in which case the great expedition must either starve there or quit it with all speed, and with complete failure facing it. This shortness of supply, combined with the lateness of the season, forbade an attack on Placentia, in Newfoundland, which was intended to have formed a subsequent item in the programme

* Lediard, vol. ii., p. 854.

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had the attack on Quebec succeeded. There was then nothing for it but to return home to meet the disgrace which failure almost invariably entailed at the hands of the Government and people of England upon the naval officer who was the agent. Sir Hovenden Walker did not, however, at first meet this disgrace. He commanded again in the West Indies, until after the peace of Utrecht in 1713, but was afterwards, for reasons not on public record, struck off the list of Admirals.*

In bringing the War of the Succession to a conclusion, as far as attacks from over the sea are concerned, there appear to be but two incidents which it is desirable to refer to.

I have spoken, in my tenth chapter, of the effect of the wind in the West Indies preventing a fleet at Jamaica from exercising any command over the water surrounding the Eastern Islands. Sir Hovenden Walker was at Antigua on June 24th, 1712, and then probably in command of 8 sail. He may not have had intelligence of the fact, but the French then had a considerable naval force in the neighbourhood, so that, when he sailed for Jamaica and arrived there on July 6th, he consequently left behind him a sea to some extent commanded by the enemy. Nor were the French slow to take advantage of the conditions. M. Cassard, with 8 large men-of-war, and 17 or 18 smaller vessels, and some thousands of troops, made an unsuccessful attack on Antigua, and then raided the island of Monserrat, quitting it, however, with precipitation on hearing of the approach of some English war-ships. The few that there were in these waters appear to have concentrated themselves for the defence of the islands, so that a second attempt proposed against Antigua was given over. Something, however, seems to have been done against Surinam and St. Christophers by the French, but the accounts are meagre and conflicting.

Duguay-Trouin had conducted a somewhat considerable and successful expedition against Rio Janeiro in 1711, where he was able to land near 3,000 men, all the conditions which we have noted as being conducive to success being present.†

It may, perhaps, appear not so easy to lay hold of any principles governing so varied a series of occurrences as I have detailed in this chapter. But I think that, properly understood, principles

* As a teetotaller and a vegetarian, Walker was probably not a popular man. *See* Lediard. Note in vol. ii., p. 855.

† De Lapeyrouse, vol. ii., p. 115.

of the broadest and clearest kind may be drawn out and adopted as lessons.

In the first place, the rule as to the influence of the superior naval force in checking, preventing, or interrupting attacks on territory by the inferior naval force continues absolutely unbroken. We see Gibraltar three times saved, and Barcelona once saved, by Sir John Leake, when the base of the fleet was as far distant as Lisbon. Sir John Norris catches the French attempt on Sardinia, as it were in mid-air, and stops it altogether, at considerable loss to the would-be invaders. It is, perhaps, worthy of note, too, that the French hoped to effect this act of evasion by means of propulsion independent of wind. The galleys employed were not able to effect their object, but they were able to escape by reason of their greater mobility, while the sailing ships became the spoils of the victorious English. On a smaller scale, the principle is illustrated at least once in the West Indies, where the proposed attack on Antigua is frustrated by the appearance of naval force, and where the raiding of Monserrat is checked by the rumour of approaching naval force. The failure of Forbin's attempt on Scotland is possibly a still stronger illustration of the rule, for if we suppose Scotland to have been at any point friendly to the landing of the French troops, the expedition was one not involving either time to complete the naval part of it, or communication over sea afterwards.

Where the naval force is so superior as to be in assured command of the sea, the operations on the Spanish coast, the capture of Cette and of Port Royal,* the raiding of some of the West India Islands, and the capture of Rio Janeiro by the French, all prove the openness of territory to attack in spite of local defences when the surrounding sea is not defended.

On the other hand, it is a question of the relations between the attack and the local defence, whether the latter proves superior. Of this we get an illustration in M. Cassard's failure against Antigua, and success against Monserrat, so far as approaching naval force admitted.

But then the reflection offers itself that, in the West Indies at least, while superior local and fixed defensive force was necessary to repel attacks when made, inferior defensive and movable naval force may have been sufficient to prevent even the contemplation of a territorial attack. This is illustrated by the curious coincidences

* Annapolis.

between the cessation of territorial attacks and the appearance of hostile squadrons facing each other, even where the difference of force was great. And a further particular reflection occurs when we see the success which attended so many of the attacks from island on island, and the fruitlessness of so many local defences, whether the permanent maintenance by either side, of a small squadron at the Leeward Islands might not have been a cheaper as well as a more effective means of defence. There seems reason to believe that French and English naval forces, in nearly equal strength, always in those waters, might have meant territorial peace throughout the war.

But it is clear that to read aright the lessons of this series of territorial attacks, whether successful or unsuccessful, we must take largely into account the effect the *season* had in preventing in those days the maintenance of naval force in a permanent position. Whatever advantages were gained on either side from the absence of opposing naval force in the West Indies were due to season, or to the belief or custom that naval force must be withdrawn from certain localities at certain times. Take away this element of withdrawal, and all idea of territorial attack passes away, not only by the inferior naval power, but even by the superior naval power also, unless the superority is very great indeed.

Another point to be noticed, as more or less influencing all territorial attacks, is the relative distance of the bases from the objective. Taking Barcelona as an example, the French were at an advantage in all operations, either for its attack or defence, because of its nearness to Toulon; and they were able to strike at it, or to succour it, as the case might be, because the English naval base was as distant as Lisbon. In the West Indies, too, we see operations conducted from the base of Martinique against neighbouring islands, which are not at all checked by naval force with its base far to leeward at Jamaica.

But yet all these questions as to the effect of the interference of naval force with territorial attacks seem to be in abeyance, not only in the minds of the historians who relate the facts for us, but even in the contemplation of the chief actors when we meet their *ipsissima verba*. No doubt there are two ways of accounting for this. It may be said that the thought was equally absent from their minds as from their words, because as a fact this threat of naval interference did not influence the actors. For myself, I cannot so argue. I cannot deny the detailed experience of so

many cases where the naval force went beyond the threat, and was absolutely defensive. Nor can I escape from the conviction that the occasional allusions—mere slips of the pen, they seem to be—to the governing power of the naval threat in territorial attacks and defences, betoken an abiding sense of a cause so obvious to naval commanders that it does not occur to them to state it in form. Historians do not seem to have been well enough informed to notice the omissions and their causes.

I must observe also, generally, that while on the one side we have seen, both in the Mediterranean and the West Indies, successful attacks on commerce by the inferior fleet evading the superior, and successful reliefs conveyed over sea in spite of the presence of superior naval force, we should check our conclusions upon the facts by remembering that, as yet, history has shown us very little blockade, or attempt to blockade. The superior navy covers each operation by the display of such a force on the spot that the enemy does not dare to appear, but it leaves the enemy free to attack unguarded supplies and convoys. The practice, perhaps even the idea, of barring the enemy in his ports, and so preserving a free sea in rear, is not yet developed.

CHAPTER XV.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea succeed or fail—(*continued*).

Spain in 1718, being in command of the Mediterranean Sea, conquers Sicily.—Byng appears, and destroys the Spanish fleet.—Sea round Sicily commanded by the British, Sicily offers to surrender.—Case of Sardinia parallel to that of Sicily.—Spanish attempt on Ross-shire a failure.—Vigo raided by Mighells and Lord Cobham.—Capture of Porto Bello remarkable as the direct attack by ships.—Cartagena, in the West Indies, bombarded by Vernon.—Surrender of Chagres to simple bombardment.—Change in strategic condition of West Indian waters in consequence of arrival of Spanish and French fleets.—Misapprehensions of contemporary historians.—Arrival of Ogle and departure of French fleet reverses strategic conditions.—Cartagena attacked.—Incomprehensible failure.—St. Jago de Cuba.—Failure of attack from personal causes.

Spain in 1718 had crept up considerably in naval power, yet was admittedly incapable of contending against England for the dominion of the sea. Nevertheless, she held fallacious ideas as to the possibility of making and holding conquests which required free sea-communications for their maintenance. She proposed to wrest the island of Sicily from the House of Savoy against the will of the power which would, when it chose, command the Mediterranean Sea, and, of course, to hold it in spite of opposing naval force.

In July 1718, she herself being in command of the Mediterranean, a Spanish army of 30,000 men, convoyed by a fleet of 22 sail of the line, had no difficulty in possessing itself of almost the whole island, the fortress of Messina being, in fact the sole possession remaining to the House of Savoy.

But in August the interfering British fleet appeared off Messina, under the command of Sir George Byng, and began the series of operations which could only result in the undoing of all that the Spaniards, in their want of comprehension of the problem, had been

at such pains to do. The Spanish fleet, consisting of 17 sail of the line,* had quitted Messina for the east coast of Sicily only the day before Byng with 22 sail of the line arrived there. Byng made fair proposals to the Spanish general, the Marquis de Lede, and these being rejected, he scented the prey of the Spanish fleet and made sail after it. War was not yet declared, but the conquest of Sicily from a British ally was, according to Byng's construction of his orders, in itself such a declaration. The Spanish fleet cannot be said to have made any attempt to really defend itself against a force not only numerically but individually superior, materially and morally. Byng's work at the ensuing battle, called the Battle of Cape Passaro, was a chase and a destruction. Nine sail of the line, 3 frigates, and 3 smaller vessels were taken; 3 sail of the line and 5 smaller vessels were burnt, and only 5 sail of the line, 7 frigates, and some galleys and smaller vessels, escaped. The fate of Sicily was sealed by this battle, and the fact that the citadel of Messina surrendered to the Spanish army a month afterwards was of no account. It was like a knight's excursion over to the opponent's side of the board to capture a pawn and be himself cut off.

War was declared by Great Britain against Spain in December 1718, and the weaker naval power immediately set about concocting one of those descents which might possibly not require the command of the sea for its success, evasion of the superior naval force being assumed a possibility. Spain proposed to land troops in Scotland, to raise the country on behalf of the Pretender. Forty transports, with 5,000 troops on board and abundance of the munitions of war, sailed from Cadiz early in 1719 under convoy of 5 men-of-war, bound to the coast of Ross, the whole under the control of the exiled and proscribed James Butler, Duke of Ormond. As usual, the British force was far behind in time, and it was not till April that Sir John Norris put to sea on the defensive. But more than a month before he sailed, winds and weather had practically put an end to the Spanish expedition. On the 28th of February the Spaniards fell in with a gale of wind when they were 150 miles west of Finisterre, which broke up and dispersed the whole fleet. Only 5 transports and 3 frigates reached Ross-shire, from which were landed some 400 men under the Earl Marshal, the Earl of Seaford, and the Marquis of Tullibardine. Major-General Wightman met this force after it had drawn some 1,500

* Ships of 44 guns and upwards.

Scotchmen to the Jacobite standard, and defeated it. Whereupon the invaders surrendered, and the Scottish insurgents fled hither and thither. Naval force was also on the spot, and sufficiently numerous to have checked all reinforcement.*

Byng, having cleared the way for the reduction of Sicily, allowed that matter to stand over for the winter according to the established course of warfare at that time. He wintered at Port Mahon in Minorca, and in the early spring proceeded to Naples to concert measures for reversing the Spanish conquest, he being in command of the sea, with the Empire behind him for troops, while the Spaniards in Sicily were wholly dependent on the island itself for reinforcement and supply.

The first attack was made upon Milazzo, on the north coast of Sicily, which was captured, and apparently became the landing-place for the first body of troops destined for the capture of Messina.† The transports were sent back to Naples for a reinforcement, and Byng seems to have then captured the Faro of Messina, and advanced on the town by land and sea. The town soon surrendered, and then the attack on the citadel began. Some of the Spanish men-of-war had taken refuge under the guns of the citadel, and hoped to shelter themselves till at least the citadel itself should fall. But Sir George Byng, observing that awkward questions would arise as to the disposal of these ships, caused a special battery to be erected for their destruction, which was duly effected before the citadel fell. This took place on the 7th October 1719, and on the 12th November Sir George sent his whole fleet, except the flag-ships, to Trapani, in the extreme west of the island, as convoy for 7,000 foot and 500 horse destined for its attack. This force possessed itself of Trapani, Marsala, and Mazzara, while other forces landed from other transports took Mola, Tavornina, Cantabiano,‡ and other ports. The work of the navy was, in short, of the usual character, namely, to prevent interference from the sea; to convoy, land, and support troops; and to supply ports after they were captured. Hervey § says that on the capture of Trapani the Marquis de Lede offered to evacuate the island on terms, so that the conquest was then effected. That the terms were rejected, and that the island was not evacuated till

* Hervey's *Naval History*, vol. iii., p. 406.

† Cruisers stationed to watch Palermo intercepted a squadron of 3 ships, with troops and supplies for the Spaniards. Two were captured and the third burnt.—Lediard, vol. ii., p. 883.

‡ Not identified.

§ *Naval History*, vol. iii., p. 410.

the armistice preceding the peace, does not in any way touch the main position that Spain could not hold even a great territory like Sicily, with a friendly population, against the will of the power commanding the sea. It is at the same time sufficiently manifest that it was only her temporary command of the Mediterranean which enabled her even to consider the attack. Her mistake was in supposing that she could in any way gain by a hold on Sicily destined to be shaken loose the moment the superior navy put in a word.

Just as she possessed herself of Sicily without difficulty, when there was nothing to interrupt her by sea, so had she possessed herself of Sardinia. Had the war continued, it must have been wrested from her as Sicily was, but no attempts of this kind appear to have been made by the English, owing to their forces being occupied by the attack on Sicily. Spain was forced to abandon both islands as one of the conditions of peace.

The battle of Cape Passaro in 1718 having shown that there was no chance whatever in the command of the sea being contested by Spain, and the fate of the expedition to Ross making it improbable that the Scottish Jacobites could expect any farther support from the Spanish Government, the English Government turned its attention to reprisals upon Spanish territory. These mark the second phase in the naval war, as they could not be safely or properly undertaken until the command of the sea was assured. Lord Cobham was appointed to command a body of 4,000 troops, the transports to be convoyed by a force of 5 sail of the line, under Vice-Admiral Mighells. The destination of the expedition was kept secret, but Corunna was the point of attack, and the fleet and transports sailed for that port from St. Helens on September 21st. It is stated that after waiting off the coast of Galicia for three days for the two men-of-war which failed to arrive, the delay was sufficient to change the destination of the force. Vigo was fixed upon, and Lord Cobham landed his troops three miles from the town on September 29th. The town surrendered on October 1st, the regular troops retreating into the citadel, which appears to have grown up since Sir George Rooke's attack fifteen years earlier. Batteries were erected on shore and guns landed in increasing numbers, while mortars both on shore and afloat were used against it. The citadel surrendered, on the 8th, after nearly half its defenders had been placed *hors de combat*, and the garrison marched out. Ponte Vedra at the end of the bay was subsequently taken, and its guns carried off, but

Redondela was found undefended, with its old fort in ruins. The guns being everywhere destroyed or carried off, and the forts blown up, the troops were re-embarked, and the expedition having secured plunder, chiefly in the way of arms and ammunition destined for the service of the Scottish Jacobites, to the amount £80,000, returned safely to England.*

The loss to the English was very small, two officers and three or four men only being killed. The whole expedition was qualified for success, being sufficient, well handled, and arriving over a commanded sea. It may be observed that again it was the land forces that made the attack, and that they landed where there were no works to oppose them. We also get a view of the action of the fortification policy of those days: A citadel shelters a body of troops quite unable to hold their own in the open, and causes a delay of eight days by the strength which the work conferred.

The reflection occurs that the delay was useless, and only caused additional loss to the Spaniards; but that it might have been of supreme importance had a relieving force been in a position to arrive before the eight days had expired. As the matter stood, it is impossible to say that Spain was in the smallest degree advantaged by her fortification of Vigo, though if the strength of the fortification of Corunna had to do with changing the objective to Vigo, we have their value exhibited there. The difficult strategical and economical question appears to hinge on relative cost. Was Spain at this time spending on her fixed coast defences and their garrisons a sum which would have provided a fleet which must be watched before any territorial attacks could be considered by her enemy? If there had been five or six sail of the line at Corunna, Admiral Mighells must have kept his whole force there to watch them, and the accidents of blockade would have made it necessary to have a like fleet with Lord Cobham's transports. If it had been necessary to double the naval force employed on the expedition, would it have been contemplated at all? History seems to bring these questions before us as of everlasting practical importance.

The difficulty, if not the impossibility, of carrying attacks on territory to a successful issue in the face of a naval enemy was further illustrated in this year, 1719, by what took place in the Baltic. Russia had attacked Sweden, and being so far in

* Lediard, vol. ii., p. 885; Hervey, vol. iii., p. 412.

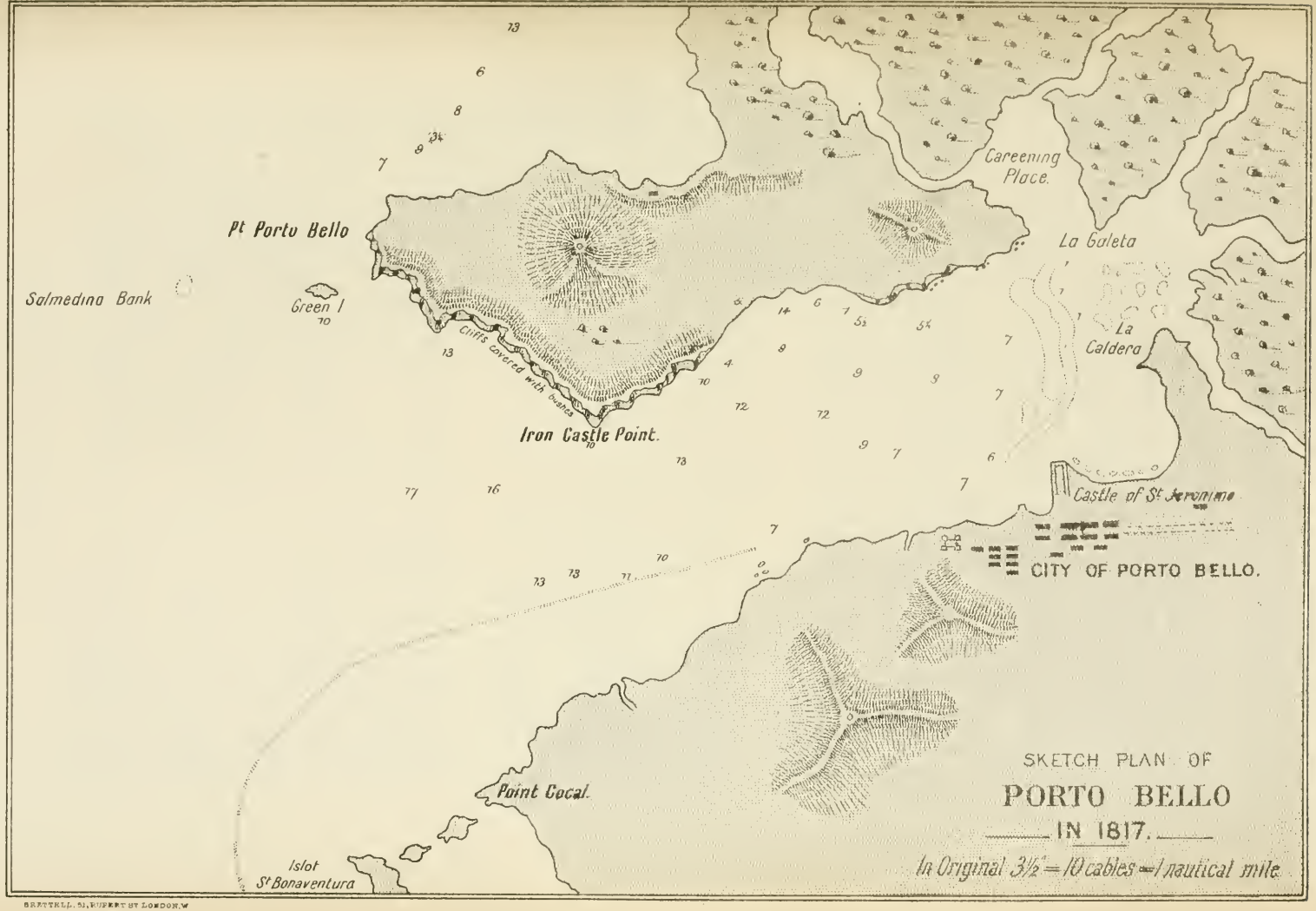
command of the Baltic that the Swedish fleet could not make even the appearance of defence, she had landed 15,000 men near Stockholm. Sir John Norris being despatched with a fleet in order to effect a pacification, joined the Swedish fleet at Carlscrona. The intelligence was enough for the Czar, who immediately withdrew his forces and retired to Revel.*

Before the outbreak of the Spanish war, which was proclaimed on October 23rd, 1739, preparations for it had, as usual, been made on a considerable scale. Two squadrons with designs of territorial attack were ordered to be got ready, the one under Captain Anson and the other under Captain Cornwall. The original intention was that Anson's squadron was to proceed round the Cape of Good Hope, while Cornwall's was to pass round Cape Horn. Cornwall was then to attack the Pacific side of the Isthmus of Darien, while Admiral Vernon was to attack the eastern side. Afterwards, Anson's and Cornwall's squadrons were to rendezvous at the Philippines for operations there. Ultimately the idea of Captain Cornwall's squadron was laid aside, and Anson took his place, prosecuting his celebrated voyage. This voyage does not concern us here farther than its mere mention as an expedition designed chiefly against territory which was known to be unprotected by any naval force, and so far at the mercy of the attacking expedition.

Vernon, with 5 sail of the line, sailed from Spithead for the West Indies on July 23rd, 1739. After touching at Antigua, he arrived at Jamaica on September 11th, where, on the 28th, he was joined by a sixth line-of-battle ship, and where a decision was come to to make an attack on Porto Bello.

At this time Porto Bello was the depôt for Panama, from which it is distant some 70 miles, and the other Pacific ports of Spain, and it was here that the great fleets of galleons, the never-failing quarry of the British seamen, were loaded with their precious cargoes. The bay is about a mile deep, and the entrance is about half a mile wide. At the entrance, on the north side of the bay, close by a steep rock, stood a strong castle, mounting 78 guns, and a lower battery mounting 22 guns, placed close to the water. These works were garrisoned by 300 men. On the opposite side of the bay, about a mile farther up and on a height, stood the Castle Gloria, which consisted of two regular bastions, mounting 90 guns, with a curtain between them mounting 22 guns, and another battery facing down the harbour, which carried 8 guns.

* Lediard, vol. ii., p. 884; Hervey, vol. iii., p. 415.



BRETTELL, 51, RUPERT ST LONDON, W

These works were manned by a garrison of 400 men. Rather above these defences, on a point running into the bay, was the strong quadrangular redoubt of Fort St. Geronimo, mounting many guns. The cannon of Gloria and St. Geronimo were intended to cover and protect the anchorage. At the bottom of the bay was the town of Porto Bello, which then contained some 500 houses. The place was reputed to be immensely strong, and not to be attempted but by an army of 8,000 men, acting with a squadron. Vernon, however, had declared in the House of Commons that he could take it with only six ships of war, and we now find him sailing thither to fulfil his promise with the force he had named. His six ships were manned by 2,495 men, and the Governor of Jamaica had lent him 200 land forces. If Vernon was fully aware of the nature of the defences he was expecting to break down, he must also have known that his undertaking was somewhat desperate.*

Vernon's plan of attack was chiefly by the ships, but he believed that as the north shore was steep-to, his ships standing in in line of battle, with a fair wind, might pass the Iron Castle at less than a cable's length, and so overpower its guns by the number and rapidity of fire of his own, accompanied by the small arms available at that distance. He gave corresponding orders; also directed the ships to tow their barges alongside and their long boats astern in standing in, so as to be ready at a moment's notice to throw appointed portions of the ships' companies on shore as storming-parties.

The squadron did not sight Porto Bello until the evening of the 20th November 1739, and it anchored 18 miles off shore for that night. On the morning of the 21st it stood in, as arranged, in line of battle, close under the guns of the Iron Castle, and began the attack. The exceedingly close quarters adopted by the Admiral had all the advantages that he had bargained for; for after a sharp exchange of fire for about twenty-five minutes, it was seen that the Spaniards were being driven from the lower battery by the musketry of the squadron, which rendered it possible to land the storming-parties. In this way the lower battery was quickly mastered, and that success was at once followed by the capitulation of the Iron Castle. Only 5 officers and 35 men actually surrendered, the remainder of the garrison of 300 having either been killed or wounded, or having fled, before the British entered the

* Hervey, vol. iv., p. 98; Entick, p. 746.

works. The loss in the squadron was inconsiderable, amounting in killed and wounded to only 19 men in all.

After the capture of the Iron Castle, the ships appear to have anchored, and a distant fire took place between Vernon's flag-ship, the *Burford*, and Gloria Castle without any great effect. On the morning of the 22nd the Admiral went on board the *Hampton Court*, the ship of Commodore Brown, who had led in the day before, for the purpose of arranging plans to warp the ships up to the Gloria and St. Geromino fortresses during the ensuing night, but the arrival of Spanish proposals to capitulate rendered these plans unnecessary. Terms of surrender were at once arranged, and before night the British were in full possession of Porto Bello.*

This operation was so far remarkable as following the example set at Gibraltar, and making the attack by the ships on the forts the primary, instead of as usual the secondary, part of the attack. We have noted that at Gibraltar there was hardly a choice in the matter, and that, contrary to principle, the landing there was in face of the works, because the geographical conditions forbade any other mode of attack. Here, at Porto Bello, the geographical conditions in no way compelled a departure from the established and more certain form of attack, but yet the want of land forces equally compelled Vernon, if he were to make the attack at all, to make it as he did. There being then no choice, we can only note that the extreme boldness, not to say rashness, of the attack was probably justified by some previous belief that the conduct of the garrisons of the Porto Bello fortresses would turn out to be what it actually was; and that, as at Gibraltar success was hoped for from the numerical weakness of its garrison, so at Porto Bello victory was achieved as a consequence of the just estimation of the moral weakness of its defenders.

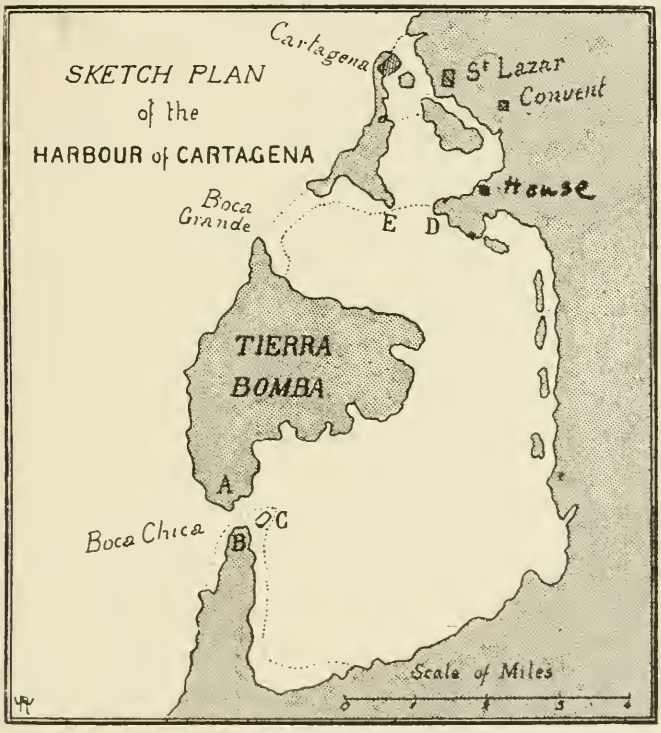
Vernon next determined to make an attack on Cartagena, though, I think, without a definite design of possessing himself of the place as he had done in the case of Porto Bello. Perhaps the determining cause in this new design was the reinforcement which had reached him under convoy of the *Greenwich*, of fire-ships, bomb-vessels, and store-ships. Almost certainly the possession of the bomb-vessels determined the mode of attack, which was negatively governed by the absence of any effective supply of land forces.

Cartagena, as may be seen from the sketch chart, is peculiarly situated. The town is open to bombardment from the sea, but the port which gives the town all its importance, can only be ap-

* Entick, p. 749; Hervey, p. 103; Berkeley, p. 669.

proached through the Boca Chica, a passage so narrow that only one ship can enter or leave it at a time. The possession of Boca Chica was, therefore, almost a necessary preliminary to the possession of the town, unless by bombardment or other direct form of attack the town should be reduced to the surrendering point, in which case the port might be expected to fall with it.

Vernon arrived within sight of the high land about Sta. Martha, east of Cartagena, on March 1, 1740. He had with him only 5



A.—Position of Fort St. Louis and Redoubts. B.—Fascine Battery, &c.
C.—Fort St. Joseph. D.—Mancinilla. E.—Castillo Grande.

ships of the line with 7 smaller vessels and the bomb-vessels, his own flag-ship, the *Burford*, having been left behind at Port Royal to careen after running ashore at Porto Bello. He left one ship to windward, to guard the approaches from the eastward, and himself anchored with his ships in the open water off the town of Cartagena on the 3rd. On the 6th the bomb-vessels were placed in position under cover of the smaller vessels, and they opened and continued a bombardment until the morning of the 7th. A certain

amount of damage only was done—"enough," as Vernon wrote, "to awaken Don Blas de Lezo, and to let him know I was not stealing upon him by surprise." This being accomplished, Vernon, on the 10th weighed, and after closely examining the coast and Boca Chica, with a view to possibly subsequent operations, stood away for Porto Bello to water, and with the intention of operating by way of bombardment upon the fortress of Chagres.*

This operation was systematically and deliberately carried out by the bomb-vessels, and three of the line-of-battle ships, using only their lower tiers, and firing slowly and carefully, from the 22nd of March 1740 till the 24th, when the fortress hoisted a flag of truce and surrendered.

The fall of Chagres after an attack by bombardment alone, comes upon us now, we may observe, as in some sort a novelty in naval war. We have had captures of forts by the attack of land forces, without any direct assistance from the ships; we have had them when the attack by ships has been made subsidiary to that by land forces; and we have seen the captures made, as at Gibraltar and Porto Bello, where the main attack has been by the ships, and the land attack has completed it. We have also had bombardments where no surrender has followed. This fall of Chagres appears to be the first instance of capture following simple bombardment, but the course of history shows us that the result was exceptional, and depended on the geographical situation of the place, and the moral fibre of the garrison defending it.

All this time nothing is heard of any possible opposition by the Spanish at sea, and we therefore observe the results in the capture of Porto Bello and Chagres, and the bombardment of Cartagena, of the strategic condition of a commanded sea. It can hardly be a mere coincidence that the expectation of the arrival of Spanish naval force, and the cessation of territorial attacks, should again be simultaneous. In the beginning of June 1740, Vernon had a despatch from the British Minister at Lisbon, announcing the departure from Cadiz of a Spanish squadron, said to be destined for the West Indies. Vernon thereupon put to sea from Jamaica and cruised to windward, in the hope of falling in with it; but getting no intelligence he returned to Port Royal.†

* Berkeley, p. 674; Entick, p. 749; Hervey, p. 110.

† The naive misapprehension of historians in general as to the operating causes in the circumstances of naval war is aptly illustrated by a remark of Hervey (vol. iv., p. 114). He says, "The abatement of this commander's (Vernon's) zeal, first appeared in the shortness of this cruise." Hervey had clearly made a mental note of the cessa-

Although I do not find any mention of it, it seems more than probable that Vernon at this time had notice of the great likelihood that France would presently throw in her lot with Spain, and he may have known that not only was the Spanish squadron from Cadiz to be expected, but that another Spanish fleet,* accompanied by a French one, had sailed from Ferrol, for a like destination. I think that Vernon must have been aware, in the autumn of 1740, that the balance of power in the West Indies, so to call it, was about to be turned, and that this consideration tied his hands. It seems of all things the most unlikely that so soon after the daring and almost reckless attack upon Porto Bello, the admiral could have changed his nature, and have sunk, as he was accused of doing, into a slothful repose.

To re-establish command of the sea in the West Indies, Rear-Admiral Sir Chaloner Ogle sailed from Portsmouth on the 26th October 1740 at the head of 21 sail of the line,† besides frigates and fire-ships, and with a considerable body of marines and land forces under Lord Cathcart.‡ As usual, the actual departure of this fleet was much behind the appointed time. Vernon had such intelligence of its intended sailing, that he put to sea from Jamaica with his whole squadron on October 3rd, hoping to fall in with Ogle on the coast of Hispaniola. Instead of this, he only heard on the 12th of its detention by contrary winds at home. On the same day, he learnt that the Spanish Ferrol squadron, under Admiral Torres, had arrived at Porto Rico on September 7th, and had sailed for Cartagena on the 25th of the same month. Soon after this, he learned that the French fleet under the Marquis d'Antin had arrived at St. Louis in the west of Hispaniola, and that possibly some enterprise against Jamaica was threatened although war was not yet declared. This intelligence necessarily drove the admiral back to his headquarters at Port Royal, where he busied himself with preparations for defence, pending the time when the arrival of Ogle should enable him once more to take the offensive.

tion of Vernon's activity after such a group of exploits as he had just described. But he did not in the least connect it with the apprehended arrival of a Spanish fleet in West Indian waters.

* Twelve sail of the line. Entick, p. 751.

† Entick, p. 752. Hervey (vol. iv., p. 107) says 25, and gives their names, but several of the names do not appear in the list which Entick gives of the total West India fleet united under Vernon.

‡ The regiments of Harrison and Wentworth, 6 regiments of marines, and detachments. Entick, p. 751.

As, taking all together, the different and probably hostile forces were at bay, no steps were taken on either side, and Ogle arrived at what was then the neutral island of Dominica on December 19th, where Lord Cathcart died. Ogle then went on to St. Christopher's and sailed thence for Jamaica on December 28th, where he arrived on January 9th, 1741.* A council of war was presently held to consider the situation, and determine future proceedings. The resolution come to was: "That the whole fleet should proceed to windward, to observe the motions of the squadron under the command of the Marquis d'Antin, which had been for some time at Hispaniola; and that Captain Dandridge should be sent before in the *Wolf* sloop, to get intelligence." "The resolution," says the historian Hervey, "taken by the general officers at this council was very surprising, and their motives for forming it quite inexplicable. Every circumstance seemed to concur in pointing out an immediate attack upon the Havannah, by the reduction of which Spain would have been humbled into the most abject submission, and as it lay to leeward of Jamaica, the fleet might have reached it in two or three days. Instead of directing their force against that quarter, it was resolved to beat up against the wind to Hispaniola and St. Domingo, to observe the motions of the French squadron. Three weeks elapsed from the arrival of Sir Chaloner Ogle to the sailing of the fleet under Vice-Admiral Vernon; and when another fortnight had been spent in a fruitless cruise, intelligence was received that the French fleet had sailed for Europe in great distress, being destitute of men and provisions, neither of which could be procured in the West Indies."† How easily the point of naval operations may be missed, is once more illustrated by this extremely instructive passage. The historian has been following through three volumes and a half the narrative of these incidents which I have brought together into a single group. As he has studied them, they have come into his mind mixed with an immense variety of other incidents, and it has never struck him that law has been governing every step that has been taken. So he does not perceive that Vernon's later conduct, and the resolution of the council of war, are only of a piece with all that had hitherto taken place in concordance with naval success. He has no consciousness that the fall of Porto Bello and Chagres were primarily due to the absence of possibly interfering naval force in

* On his way six of his ships had a partial action with a small French squadron, supposing them to be enemies. They separated with some loss and mutual apologies.

† Hervey, vol. iv., p. 134.

the West Indies, and that with the 12 sail of the line of Spaniards at Cartagena, beside the Cadiz squadron of 5, and the 14 French sail of the line at St. Domingo,* Vernon's 29 sail of the line was not a force to overawe each squadron separately and liberate a sufficient force to operate against Havannah at the same time. Yet nothing can be more certain than that any territorial attack undertaken by Vernon at this time would have been culpably foolish and rash, and would have deserved the terrible condemnation which must have been pronounced upon it, had France and Spain taken proper advantage of the British mistake.† More than foolish and rash would it have been to run to leeward to Havannah, leaving the French to windward of Jamaica, and offering, as it were, the right cheek for a blow which would be accepted on the left cheek subsequently.

But the receipt of news that the French fleet had quitted the West Indies altered the whole position, and on February 16th a council of war decided to make an attack on Cartagena.

The force at Vernon's disposal was now 29 sail of the line with 22 frigates, fire-ships, and bomb-vessels, and transports carrying, with the men-of-war, a body of about 12,000 troops. The fleet itself was manned by about 15,000 men, and the total number of the ships was about 124.‡ This was a gigantic armament, and if it had been found possible to destroy Porto Bello with about one-fifth of the ships and about one-twelfth of the men, the doom of Cartagena must have appeared already sealed when the great fleet turned its course to the southward and steered for the place. On the 4th of March the armada dropped its anchors in the open water to the northward of the town of Cartagena, and at once made dispositions as though a force was about to land on that part of the coast, and so drew the garrison to intrench itself in that direction.

Cartagena was not unused to hostile demonstrations ending in capture. Sir Francis Drake had sacked it in 1585, and not long afterwards it had been again sacked and left in ruins by a few privateers. In 1697 it had been captured by the French under de Pointis, who were said to have made a booty of £9,000,000. It was now considered the principal, the most populous, and the best fortified city in Spanish America. Its garrison numbered 4,000 Spaniards, besides negroes and Indians, and now it was further

* De Lapeyrouse Bonfils, vol. ii., p. 246, gives the names. There were also five frigates.

† Campbell (*Lives of the Admirals*, vol. iv., p. 275. Ed. 1813) is precisely under the same error.

‡ Entick, p. 754.

strengthened by the Spanish squadron under Don Blas de Lezo. The approach to the town from the sea was naturally protected by shallow water, which extended nearly three miles out, and the want of shelter of any kind from northerly or westerly winds, put a regular attack from that side almost out of the question.

The real objective in an attack on Cartagena was the port, which, again, was to be got at only by way of the narrow passage of Boca Chica, eight miles to the southward of the town. This entrance was defended on its northern shore, called Tierra Bomba, by a regular square fort called St. Louis with four bastions, strong and well-built, and mounting 82 guns and 3 mortars. The central work was strengthened by several redoubts: St. Philip with 7 guns, St. Jago with 15 guns, and a small fort of 4 guns called the Battery de Chamba. On the south side of the entrance was a fascine battery of 15 guns called the Barradera, and in a small bay at the back of that another battery of 4 guns; and facing the entrance on a small flat island stood Fort St. Joseph, of 21 guns. From this to the north shore a boom and cables were carried, and behind the boom one 70-gun and three 66-gun ships were moored with their broadsides covering the entrance.

Beyond this passage lay the great lake or harbour of Cartagena, land-locked in all its southern part, and capable of sheltering a vast navy. About midway towards the town it grew narrower, and about three miles south of the town there was a second narrow passage formed by two peninsulas, the one to the west being crowned by a fort mounting 59 guns, called Castillo Grande, and the one to the east bearing a horse-shoe battery of 12 guns, called Mancinilla. There was a shoal between these two points, and ships had been sunk on each side to block the passage against the British. The town of Cartagena itself, spreading over two low sandy islands, was surrounded by natural defences of shoal water and swamps, and was artificially strengthened by works mounting no less than 300 guns. West of the city, about a mile from the gate called Himani, and on a hill fifty or sixty feet high, was the Castle of St. Lazar, which was a fort about fifty feet square, with three demi-bastions, having guns mounted, two on each face, one on each flank, and three on each curtain. The fort itself was not so strong, but it was in a commanding position, and covered the approach to the city on that side. There was, however, a height about 400 yards from it, which entirely commanded it.*

* Entick, p. 754 (note).—The place chosen for the beginning of the attack and the landing was that which de Pointis had successfully used forty-four years before.

Vernon had already, as we have seen, some knowledge of the nature of the work before him. He had also sent in advance of the fleet a line of battle-ship, a frigate, and a sloop, to reconnoitre and sound. From the captains of these ships, and particularly from Captain Knowles of the *Weymouth*, who had hitherto acted as engineer to Vernon's operations, he learnt that the most suitable commencement of the attack would be to possess himself of the forts on the north side of Boca Chica, and that there was anchorage almost within musket shot of the redoubts St. Philip and St. Jago without opening the guns of the great fort of St. Louis or Boca Chica.

The fleet being at this time organized in three divisions, Ogle commanding the van, Vernon the centre, and Commodore Lestock the rear, it was determined in council that Ogle should take his division down to Boca Chica, and should anchor three line-of-battle ships to batter forts St. Philip and St. Jago while two more attacked the smaller work of Chamba.

On the 9th of March, Sir Chaloner Ogle, having with him General Wentworth, who had succeeded to the command of the troops on the death of Lord Cathcart, proceeded to the southward, and having placed the five ships in their appointed stations, reduced the fire of the batteries so completely, that 500 grenadiers being landed, under Lieut.-Col. Cochrane, they were in possession of the three redoubts by eight o'clock in the morning, and there was nothing to prevent such further disembarkation of troops as might be decided on.

This success had been achieved with a loss of only six men directly, but indirectly it was heavier. One of the ships, the *Shrewsbury*, had had her cable cut by a shot, and not having a second anchor immediately ready, she drifted opposite the Boca Chica, and was for the whole of the day engaged with nearly all the batteries, thereby suffering great and useless damage, and a loss of sixty men in killed and wounded.

Towards night on the 9th, the bomb-vessels got into place, and began to play on Fort St. Louis; and during the next day the two regiments of foot and the six regiments of marines were all landed without opposition, and with and after them were carried great stores of artillery, ammunition, and camp equipage. On the 13th, a mortar-battery which had been erected began to play on Fort St. Louis, and by the 14th all the stores had been landed, as well as twelve 24-pounders from the ships' armaments.

From the moment the troops landed they seem to have become

sickly, and to have either lost heart or energy. Vernon complained to Wentworth of the dilatoriness of the military operations, and Wentworth in reply complained of want of support from his officers. The navy seems to have omitted nothing that could convenience the soldiers, and the force landed was certainly superabundant for the mere duty of reducing the remaining works on the Tierra Bomba side of Boca Chica. The fascine battery on the south side of the passage proving to be a great annoyance to the military camps, Vernon sent a landing-party of seamen which, on the night of the 19th of March stormed it, spiked the guns, and tore up the platforms, sustaining very little loss, and returning to the ships with six wounded prisoners.

The main object of the army was the erection of a battery, under cover of a wood, to reduce Fort St. Louis to a condition suitable for the troops to attack, and it was hoped that this might be so speedily set in order as to enable the engineers to transfer their skill to the south side of the passage and to capture all the forts on both sides without putting the ships to the hazard of attacking a passage so formidably covered by guns. But the 21st of March arrived without the completion of the battery on the north side alone, though 500 seamen had been lent for that purpose.

The vice-admiral began to grow seriously uneasy at the delay. The season was drawing on. The anchorage was so exposed and so bad, that the rocks were continually cutting the ships' cables. There was a growing danger of interruption from seaward, as Vernon had intercepted intelligence informing him that de Torres had arrived at Havannah with the Ferrol fleet, and was expecting to be joined by a French fleet under Rochefeuille. It became plain that if the business was to be done at all, the navy would have to take it in hand promptly, and finish it.

Accordingly, on the 23rd, Commodore Lestock conducted an attack upon the northern forts and the ships supplementing them, with three 80-gun and three 70-gun ships. They were terribly shattered and obliged ultimately to draw off, but other ships took their places, and the seamen landing, carried those of the batteries on the south side which had been in part restored. Meanwhile the land forces had opened fire from their long delayed battery on the 22nd, and by the 24th, a practicable breach was effected in the ramparts of Fort St. Louis. It was arranged to storm it on the evening of the 25th, and by way of diversion, Vernon sent Captain Knowles with a large landing-party to take the fort, as it were, in flank.

The fortress fell so easily to Wentworth's stormers, that Knowles

pushed on with the boats to Fort St. Joseph, which he took with hardly any loss, the garrison flying precipitately on his approach. It was the same with the ships. Arrangements had been made for scuttling them in the event of a reverse, but such was the hurry and confusion consequent on Knowles' approach, that one of them, the *Gallicia*, fell into his hands intact, with her captain and 60 men. A complete conquest of the passage was thus made, and nothing barred the way but the boom and the *Gallicia*, which Knowles speedily removed, and the next day, March 26th, the Admiral and several of the ships not only passed into the harbour, but advanced several miles towards the town. On the 26th, some of the ships directed to do so, had anchored just out of gunshot of Castillo Grande.

By the 30th the whole fleet was inside, and it must have appeared to most of those engaged that a success as splendid as that of Porto Bello was already achieved. But certain points might have been taken into consideration. It is apparent to us now, and after the event, that a much larger force than necessary had been landed on Tierra Bomba ; that force had already suffered a loss of 400 by sickness and casualties. It had to be re-embarked before anything farther could be done, and when re-embarked it would carry the seeds of sickness with it. To complete the success, it was probably necessary to push the garrison of Cartagena at once, and before they had time to recover themselves, but the troops were not again ready to land until the morning of the 5th of April, and then not all of them.

But pending their readiness, the ships had been pushing up and on. The fort on Mancinilla (Manzanilla) being weak, was destroyed by the Spaniards themselves on the nearer approach of the squadron ; and on the 30th Sir Chaloner Ogle with some of the ships of his division having anchored close to Castillo Grande, Captain Knowles reconnoitring in the evening, came to the conclusion that the enemy was evacuating that fort also. Next morning it was discovered that they had sunk the two remaining line-of-battle ships of the squadron in the channel, and had abandoned the fort, which was immediately taken possession of by the British. There was nothing now between the navy and the town but the sunken ships, and the shallow water beyond them.*

Some of the bomb-vessels were now brought up, and on April 2nd began to play on the town, and a few of the guns of Castillo

* No mention is made in my accounts, of Fort Pastelillo, which appears in the plan of 1854.

Grande were likewise utilized in that direction. By the evening a passage was made through the sunken wrecks, and three fire-ships passed through it to occupy stations for covering the landing of the troops when it should take place. On the 3rd, the *Weymouth*, Captain Knowles' 60-gun ship, passed through the western channel and came under the fire of the town without material damage to herself, and next night she passed round the shoal to a secure position in the eastern part of the harbour, where were now assembled other covering ships which swept the surrounding country with their guns, and prepared for the landing of the troops from the transports which were beginning to warp in.

Even now, and notwithstanding the delay, the fall of Cartagena could not but have seemed certain, to both soldiers and sailors. The troops began to land early on the morning of the 5th, at a place about two miles from St. Lazar,* and though the whole of the garrison was drawn out of the town to oppose them, it was broken up into small parties, and Wentworth's advance was little retarded.

What actually followed seems almost inexplicable. The Admiral, daring to rashness as we have seen him up to this moment, and trying everything before he pronounced that it could not be done, suddenly, and without warrant, came to the conclusion that there was not water to allow his ships to close up to the town and fire on it. As a fact, we now know that there was 7 fathoms water close up to where Fort Pastelillo is now shown on the 1854 plan, that is, within 1,000 yards of the town. He therefore made no advance after landing the troops.

General Wentworth, on his part, had secured the convent surmounting the highest point, and knew or ought to have known, for he saw it with his own eyes, that Fort St. Lazar was not very strong, and was commanded from higher ground close to the eastward of it. Instead of pushing on to what, after his experience, he ought to have supposed was an easy conquest, he not only made no attempt either upon the fort, or upon the heights commanding the fort, but set about making an encampment, and lay for three nights waiting for tents and baggage.

Between the Admiral, who seemed suddenly to be morally paralyzed, and the General, who had all the time seemed to think that if he kept his mouth open long enough the cherries would certainly drop into it, there arose mutual recriminations.

* Very probably near the spot where the house stands which is marked on the sketch-plan, if that be not the identical house which is spoken of in the accounts of the landing.

The General complained that the fleet lay idle, while his troops were harassed and diminished by hard duty and distemper. The Admiral affirmed that his ships could not lie near enough to batter the town of Cartagena, and upbraided the General with want of activity and resolution to attack the fort of St. Lazar, which commanded the town, and might be taken by scalade. Wentworth, stimulated by these reproaches, resolved to try the experiment. His forces marched up to the attack, but the guides being slain, they mistook their route and advanced to the strongest part of the fortification, where they were, moreover, exposed to the fire of the town. Colonel Grant, who commanded the grenadiers, was mortally wounded; the scaling ladders were found too short; the officers were perplexed for want of orders and directions, yet the soldiers sustained a severe fight for several hours with surprising firmness, but at length retreated in good order, leaving above 600 men killed or wounded on the spot.*

This check was one that the troops could not recover; sickness had already shown itself amongst them to such an extent that 500 men were either dead or incapable, and in view of all the conditions, a council of war of the land officers decided that the troops must be re-embarked with all speed. This was done on the 15th, when 3,200, of the 5,000 landed, returned to their ships, and further operations against Cartagena were abandoned.

Although in this undertaking all the forts accessible by sea which defended the approaches to Cartagena were destroyed, and with them a squadron of five sail of the line, yet the attack was a failure and not a success. But when we come to the question of why it was a failure, it is not so easily answered. It would seem clear that it was an error to land so great a force as was employed, chiefly in looking on, at the fall of the forts on Tierra Bomba. It seems at the same time strange that part of the force landed on the north side was not landed on the south side, or, at any rate, transferred to the south side when its weakness was discovered. But then the subsequent success in forcing the passage of the Boca Chica, and all the operations up to the moment of the second landing of the troops might be held to have condoned any errors at the beginning. Why it came to pass that after the second landing, and when a vigorous advance in any form, and in almost any direction, would have succeeded, there should have been no vigorous advance in any direction, passes knowledge. The ultimate failure of the attack on Cartagena is not explained, and that is all we can say about it.

But it may be remarked of the forcing of the Boca Chica that it resembled in many respects the attack at Vigo. The difference in principle is that the fleet was unsheltered, and that the landing was in the face of the batteries. Why it should have been so is not explained, though perhaps a single glance at the locality

* Hervey, vol. iv., p. 148.

might even now explain it. With the great land force at disposal, it seems strange that it should not have been employed both north and south of the passage simultaneously, and there does not now seem any reason why one party should not have been landed well to the south, and another well to the north of the forts to be taken, and then that the ships should not have co-operated in the usual way. The loss and damage to the ships in engaging the batteries does not seem to have been met by commensurate advantages. We must observe that the hazard to which the ships were put was not deliberate, but was forced on Vernon by the threat of the Spanish force a thousand miles off at Havannah.

The state of the ships was such, and his instructions so ordered it, that Vernon was obliged to send several of them home; and then, with a smaller fleet and a body of troops reduced from its original strength of 12,000 to about 3,000 only, it did not seem that there could be any continuance of territorial attacks. Vernon, however, was of a different opinion, and considered that by dividing his fleet he might have sufficient force to watch and guard against the Spanish fleet at Havannah, and also to support a land attack.

The placed aimed at was St. Jago de Cuba, a town and close harbour on the S.E. coast of the island, and then chiefly celebrated as the rendezvous of the privateers. Entrance to the port was difficult, not only because of its narrowness, but also because of certain eddy winds, which caught ships at a certain part of the approach and necessitated very special appliances if the ship was to advance. For these reasons, and not so much because of any real strength of the place in the way of fortification and garrison, it was determined to push the usual principle of successful attack to its extreme limit as it were, and to take possession of a neighbouring port easy of access and entirely undefended, and to operate upon St. Jago de Cuba overland from that sea base. This port was Walthenam Bay (now Guantanamo), 40 miles to the westward of St. Jago de Cuba, an inlet noted for its convenience, and as a shelter during the hurricane months now approaching. It appears to have been entirely unoccupied by the Spaniards, and not defended in any way, and Vernon sailed into it with his whole force on the 13th July 1741. This consisted of 61 sail in all, and comprised 9 sail of the line and 12 frigates and smaller vessels,*

* He had sent home 11 sail of the line under Lestock, and had left 9 sail of the line at Port Royal, 6 to protect Kingston, and 3 to follow him when they were ready.

with transports containing the 3,000 men remaining of the army, and 1,000 negro troops which had been raised in Jamaica. Three days were spent in getting the flotilla up the harbour, collecting information, and in placing six sail of the line across the entrance to secure it against any attack from the sea; and in arranging Sir Chaloner Ogle's division and the frigates to block the entrance to St. Jago, and to watch the motions of the Spanish fleet at Havannah.* Then on July 20th 1741, a council of war decided to begin the reduction of the Island of Cuba by the proposed attack overland upon St. Jago.

The landing was quickly and easily effected, and advanced posts were occupied on the road to St. Jago, which had been, on good evidence, considered not only practicable but convenient for the march.

On the 28th of July this advanced guard had reached the village of Elleguava with scarcely a sign of opposing forces. Major Dunster, who was conducting the advance, then returned to a station which he had left occupied, and now, on the 2nd August, found to be held by some 500 men under Colonel Cochrane. It is unaccountable that at this juncture, when there seems on the record nothing whatever to have prevented the advance and completion of the design, Colonel Cochrane should have taken his troops back to the main camp under Wentworth, and that on the 9th of August a council of war of the land officers should have decided "that they could not march any body of their troops farther into the country without exposing them to certain ruin; and that they were firmly of opinion that their advancing with the army to St. Jago in their present circumstances was impracticable."† As the decision was in the hands of the land officers, the Admiral and the naval officers, whatever they may have thought, and however they may have chafed at this second failure of the troops to complete what had been well begun, could not controvert it. But Vernon was not yet prepared to give up all hopes, and on the 4th September, leaving the troops in camp, he proceeded himself by

* "As the security of the army and all the transports depended upon the squadron being in a condition to defend the harbour from any surprise on them, which was to be dreaded, as the Spaniards had so strong a force so near to them at the Havannah, Vice-Admiral Vernon, therefore, took the safest and most prudent precautions for their security, by forming the best dispositions with his six capital ships in a line, to defend the entrance to Cumberland Harbour" (so re-named by Vernon), "having dispatched the other part of the squadron to block up the harbour of St. Jago, and to watch the motions of the Spanish Admiral at the Havannah."—Entick, p. 761.

† *Ibid.*, p. 762.

sea to St. Jago, in order to ascertain if it were possible to force the entrance with his ships. He ascertained, however, that it was a matter of warping in one ship at a time, and only with considerable difficulty, under the immediate fire of the batteries. He also found that there was neither anchorage nor landing-place near the mouth of the harbour. Reluctantly he had to admit that approach in this way was hopeless. Nevertheless, he seems to have been so pressing upon General Wentworth to keep the hold they had got on Cuba, that it was not till November that he consented to re-embark the troops, and it was not till the 28th of that month that the expedition quitted the ambitiously new-named Cumberland Bay.

In looking back, we can see that Vernon, so far from deserving the slurs that were cast upon his name for apparent want of activity and for over-caution, was really exceedingly rash in his operations against Cuba, if he supposed it possible that de Torres, with his fleet from Havanna, was capable of taking the advantage offered to him. For while de Torres presumably had a compact force of 12 sail of the line in one body, Vernon's force was divided into three sections not exceeding 6 sail of the line each. He therefore—if he ran any risks at all from Spanish movements—ran the greatest risk of being destroyed piecemeal by de Torres falling suddenly on Ogle at sea, defeating him by overwhelming superiority of numbers, and then blocking up Vernon in Cumberland Bay, while the military forces of Cuba gathered round him on the land side, and cut off his communication with the outer world entirely. It seems most probable that the Admiral and his naval surroundings had by this time come to the conclusion that there was in no case much to be feared from the activity of the Spanish Admiral. On the face of the records I am using, the whole blame of these failures must rest on the shoulders of General Wentworth, though how much of this officer's shortcomings were due to the effect on his temper of Vernon's impetuosity and probably dictatorial manner, may be open to argument. Certainly the "conditions" under which these failures took place were more personal than material.*

* Vernon asked to be recalled on his return to Jamaica, "under his daily prayers for a deliverance from a gentleman whose opinions he had long experienced to be more changeable than the moon, though he had endeavoured, agreeable to his orders, to maintain the most civil correspondence in his power with General Wentworth." Campbell, vol. iv., p. 490.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea Succeed or Fail—*continued.*

Commerce suffers when territorial attacks are in progress.—The policy carried out in the West Indies, 1742.—The quarrels of joint commanders a fruitful cause of failure.—Knowles fails in his attacks on La Guaira and Porto Cavallo, 1743.—Successful attack on Louisbourg, 1745.—The causes of success usual.—Second successful attack in the same form on Louisbourg, 1758.—Peyton loses the command of the sea in the East Indies, Madras falls in consequence, 1746.—Attempted revival of cross-raiding at Cape Breton and L'Orient; failure of both attempts, 1746.—The first capture of Minorca, 1756.—The siege and reliefs of Gibraltar, and fall of Minorca, 1780–81 and 1782.—Reflections.

In considering the nature of the transactions in the West Indies which I described in the last chapter, it is proper to notice that while the navy was occupied in making territorial attacks, commerce was suffering heavily. The result of the proceedings of 1741 was only, after all, to raise complaints in all the commercial centres of the kingdom. Petitions against the system of leaving commerce exposed poured in upon Parliament, and London, Bristol, Exeter, Glasgow, Liverpool, Lancaster, Bideford, Southampton, and other places remonstrated with the Commons on the small regard which had been paid to the defence of that on which the greatness and prosperity of the country in a large degree rested.*

But the policy of carrying out attacks upon territory was continued in the West Indies, and Wentworth's forces being augmented in January 1742 by the arrival at Jamaica of 2,000 newly-raised Marines, a project was considered of landing an army at Porto Bello, and marching across the isthmus to the capture and destruction of Panama. The cross-counsels between the Admiral and the

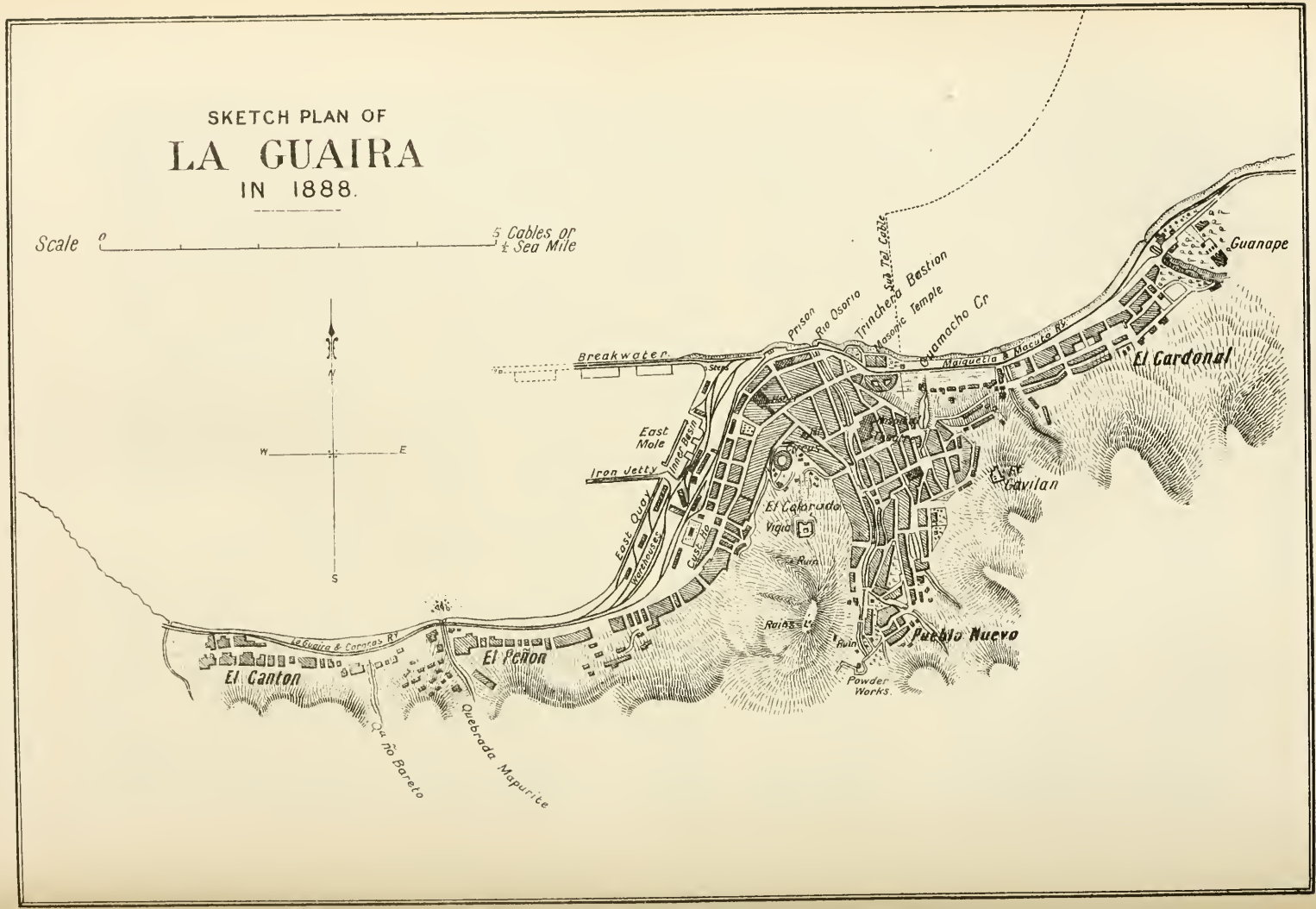
* Entick, p. 767.

General remained in full force and delayed the departure of the fleet and troops. A tedious voyage supervened; the passage, which should have occupied but eight days, covered three weeks, so that the ships did not anchor in Porto Bello harbour until March 28th. The preliminary landings to occupy the Custom House and other parts of the town were effected without difficulty, the magnates of the place making no objection when assured of protection. But on the 31st the Admiral received a memorandum from the land officers, declining to persevere in the enterprise and recommending its immediate abandonment. There was, therefore, no choice left, and the whole expedition returned to Jamaica, arriving there in the middle of May.

By the 23rd of September Vernon had his wish in the arrival of letters recalling him and General Wentworth, but not before he had given some of his mind to the latter in an assurance "that to his inexperience, injudiciousness, and unsteady temper was principally owing His Majesty's affairs having prospered so ill in those parts."*

It is clear that the failures I have narrated contain lessons for all time, in the conduct of joint naval and military expeditions such as those described. The Home Government read the lesson in one way, by giving Ogle, Vernon's successor, the absolute command of the Marines, and transferring them to the service of the fleet. But without going so far as to say that the Admiral should be given the supreme command, with power to over-ride the decisions of the land officers, it is plain that in this case Wentworth ought never to have been left in command for a moment after such incompatibilities of temper between the Admiral and the General had been shown as to render it probable that cordiality could not exist in carrying out the service. This remains plain, because there was never the least sign of failure on the part of the navy, which had done everything that was possible, both before and after the arrival of General Wentworth, and because in joint attacks the army must be considered an instrument in the Admiral's hands. Not indeed so as to give the Admiral a power of interference for which his education does not fit him, but as a something which cannot use the fleet, but can be used by the fleet. To put the matter gravely but firmly, it seems plain that had Vernon possessed the power of suspending Wentworth, the mistakes and shortcomings indicated would never have occurred. On the other hand, it seems obvious

* Entick, p. 773.


SKETCH PLAN OF
LA GUAIRA
IN 1888.
Scale
5 Cables or ½ Sea Mile
N
W
E
S
Breakwater
Steps
Prison
Rio Osorio
Trinchera Bastion
Masonic Temple
Tamacho Cr
Sea Tel. Cable
Maiquetia & Macuto Rd.
Guanape
El Cardonal
East Mole
Iron Jetty
Long Pier
East Quay
Warehouses
Custom House
El Colorado
Vigia
Ruins
Ruins Cr
Gravitan
Pueblo Nuevo
Powder Works
La Guaira & Caracas Rd.
El Peñon
El Canton
Quebrada Mapurite
Quebrada Baretto

that had Wentworth possessed the power of superseding Vernon, there was no probability that matters would have been bettered. There is but little chance that any such powers would be conferred on either officer in great undertakings; but it behoves Government, without further inquiry, to remove a General in a joint expedition the moment it is seen that he cannot cordially support the Admiral.*

In the absence of naval force, the Spaniards, from Fort St. Augustine in Florida, projected and carried out in June 1742 an invasion of the newly-settled colony of Georgia. Thirty-six transports conveyed 4,000 troops, which were landed at St. Simons and marched upon Frederica; but General Oglethorpe, the governor, made so good a show of defence that the Spaniards hastily returned to their ships and re-embarked.

In February 1743, Captain Knowles, at Jamaica, was placed in command of 5 sail of the line, 1 frigate, and 3 sloops, with orders to proceed to Antigua, there to pick up 1 40-gun and 1 20-gun ship, and to make an attempt to reduce La Guaira and Porto Cavallo (Puerto Cabello) on the Caraccas coast of South America. Captain Knowles had not been present at the capture of Porto Bello, but he had arrived there shortly afterwards, and had been specially employed in engineering the destruction of the forts. Afterwards he had been in a sense Vernon's right-hand man in planning the attacks upon Chagres and Cartagena; he was also well acquainted with the coast. The selection was not, therefore, a random one, and what afterwards happened cannot properly be set down to the choice of the commander. The only troops he was furnished with, beside his Marines, were 400 men of Dalzell's regiment.

He arrived within sight of La Guaira on February 18th. There was a considerable swell, which prevented any landing of men, and the ships could not be brought nearer than within a mile of the town. The attack, therefore, was no more than a distant bombardment, a form which had succeeded, indeed, at Chagres, but which, in tracing the history of attacks on territory to this point, we have seen no reason to put much faith in. It was said also that the Governor of the Caraccas had been in some way warned of the intended attacks, and had made considerable preparations for resistance. The fire began at noon and continued till night. The British had succeeded in blowing up one of the enemy's

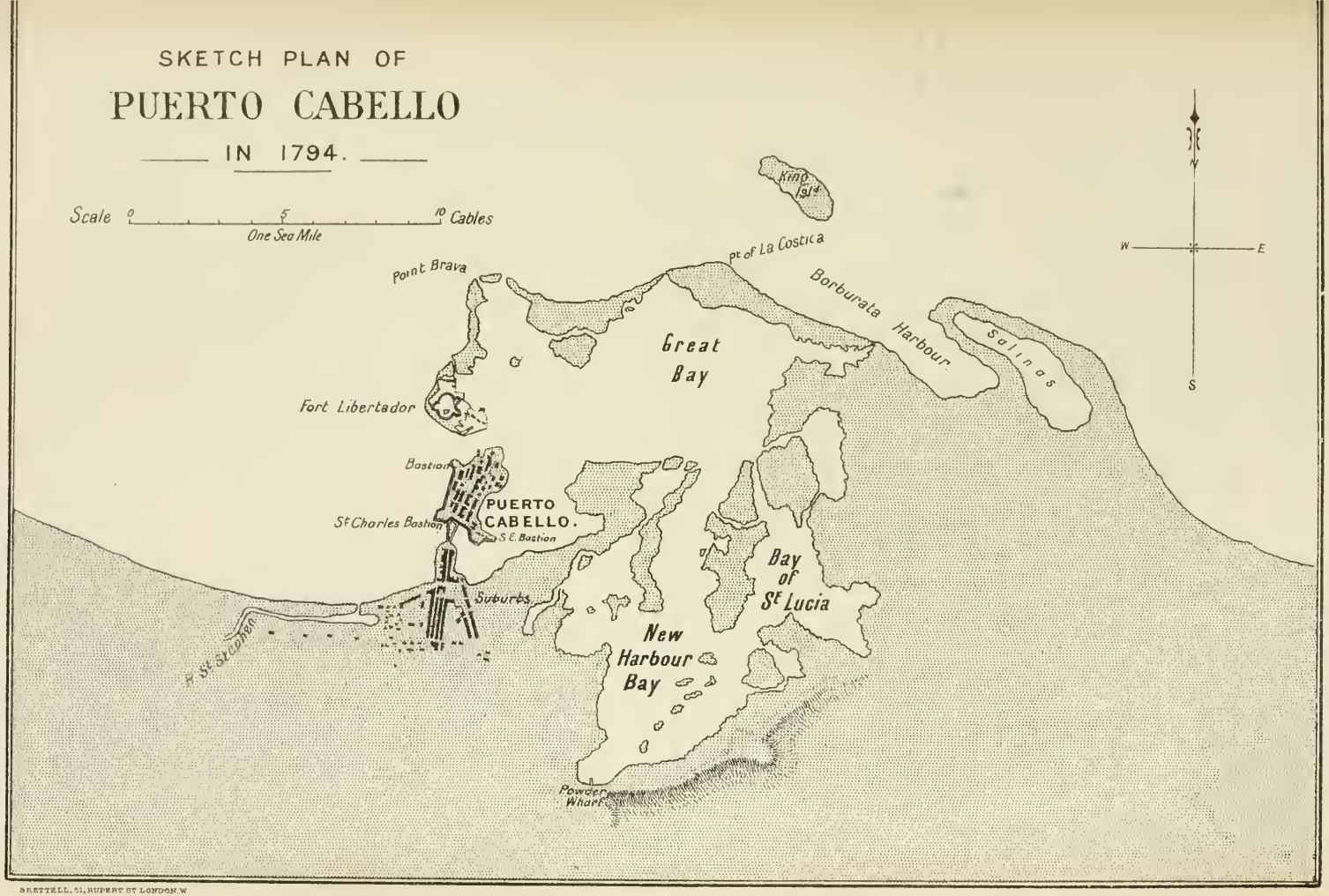
* These observations have no reference to those great undertakings like the invasions of the Crimea and Egypt, where any landings or attacks on ports are a means to an end and not an end in themselves.

magazines certainly, but four of Knowles' line-of-battle ships were so disabled that they had to be sent to Curaçoa to repair; the *Suffolk* received 140 shot, and 92 men and officers were killed, and 308 wounded.*

As I have just observed, the causes of this repulse and loss were on the surface. Sir Chaloner Ogle and Captain Knowles ought never to have had any hopes of success in a form of attack which was supported simply by what had happened at Chagres as a very exceptional case.

Warned by his failure, Knowles proceeded differently in his attack on Porto Cavallo. The place was known to be in a good state of defence, and garrisoned by some 5,500 men of various classes. Knowles procured the reinforcement of some Dutch volunteers, and proposed to make up a landing party in the usual way, covered by the fire of a detachment of his ships. He arrived near the place on April 15th, and anchored in or near Borburata Harbour, then called "The Keys of Barbarat." Commodore Knowles, in reconnoitring the defences, observed that the entrance to the harbour was blocked by a ship moored there, from which chains extended to either shore. New fascine batteries were erected in suitable places, and the centre of the defence was the Castle of St. Philip, afterwards called Fort Libertador. On Point Brava were two new fascine batteries, one mounting 12 guns and the other 7, and Knowles determined to make these his objective, in hopes that they might be taken in flank, and their guns turned against the castle. Accordingly a landing party of 1,200 men was prepared, and two ships were sent in to engage and, if possible, to silence the two batteries. When night fell, the batteries were pretty well silenced, and the men were landed on the beach to the eastward, and marched along the shore towards Point Brava, the Commodore in his boat proceeding side by side with them. They took one of the batteries completely by surprise, but the alarm being given and some guns fired by the Spaniards, the mixed party which was landed immediately fell into confusion and panic, fired into each other's ranks, and fled along the beach to the boats in hopeless disorder. This unexpected failure determined the Commodore to fall back on a general bombardment. It was carried out from about eleven in the forenoon of April 24th till dark, when the ships, having expended nearly all their ammunition and received considerable damage, returned to their anchorage at Borburata

* Entick, p. 786.



BRETTELL, 51, RUPERT ST LONDON.W

Harbour. On the 28th it was concluded that no farther attempts on the place were likely to succeed, the squadron was broken up and the ships dispersed to their several stations.

The causes of the failure at Porto Cavallo are not more difficult to seek than those which governed the repulse from La Guaira. The original attack was in the form which experience had shown to be best calculated for success, and had the party of 1,200 men landed been a homogeneous body of disciplined troops, there might have been every hope of a good result. But composed as it was of seamen, soldiers, and Dutchmen, acting together for the first time, it was not surprising that it should have fallen into confusion and panic in contact with an enemy in the dark. There was, as we have seen, no real reason to expect success from the general bombardment that afterwards followed.

As illustrating the strategical law that nothing but naval force will prevent attacks upon territory, for the reasons set out with so much force and clearness by Sir Walter Raleigh, we have it noted* that the withdrawal of the usual station ships from the British Leeward Islands for these attacks on the Spanish Main, encouraged the Spanish privateers to push beyond their usual function of capturing merchant ships, and to land plundering parties on the Island of St. Christopher's.

War having been declared against France in 1744, and there being no naval force to prevent it, the French garrison of Cape Breton made a successful raid on Nova Scotia, and captured Canso. But the arrival of a single British 40-gun ship seems to have put a termination to any farther designs of this kind by the French.

In the West Indies both sides remained on the defensive so far as territorial attacks went, the British awaiting reinforcement before anything could be undertaken.

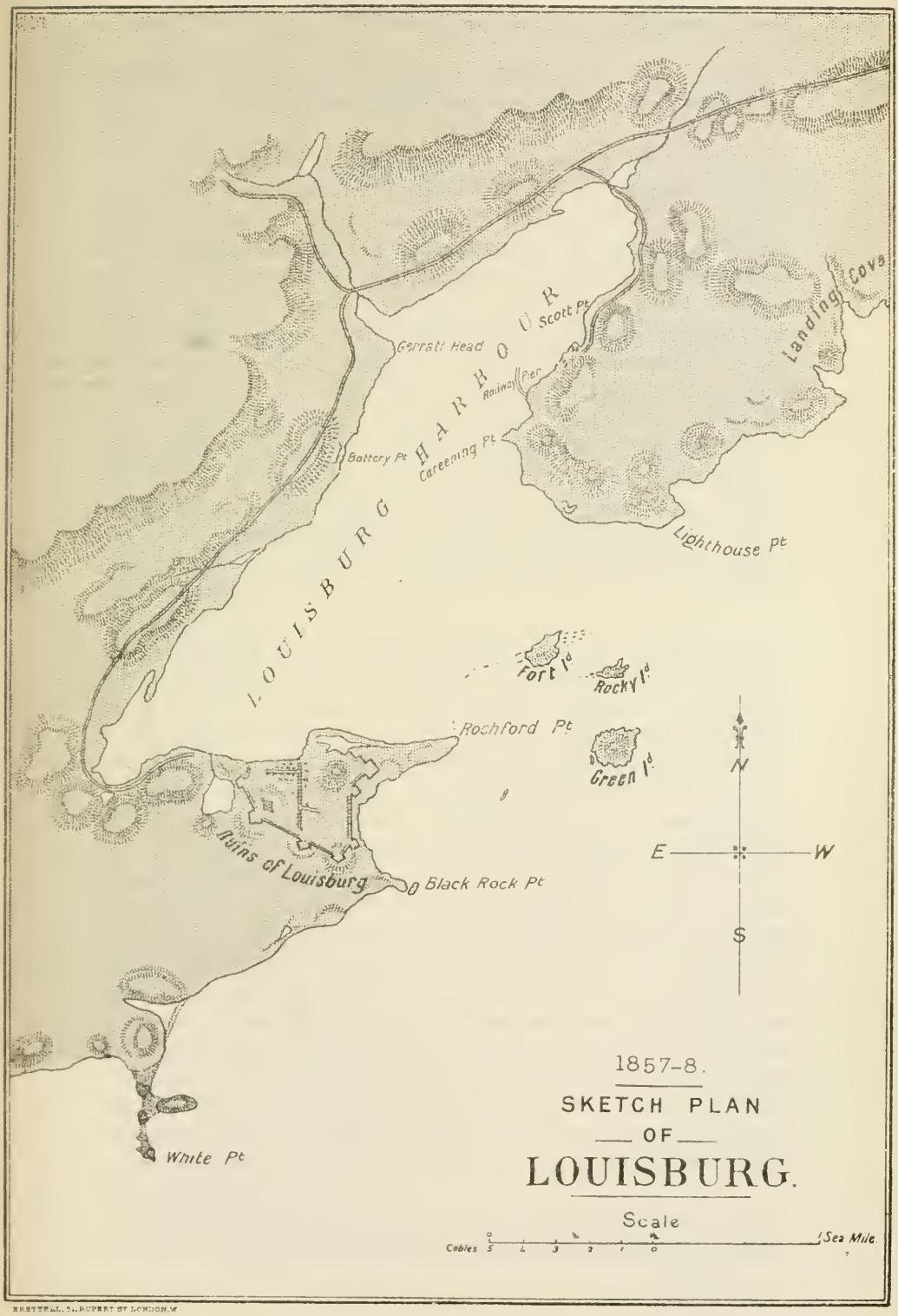
By the year 1745 plans had been arranged between the American Colonies and the Home Government for retaliation on Cape Breton. The former furnished the troops to the number of 3,850 volunteers, with 85 transports, 8 20-gun privateers, and 10 smaller vessels; these assembled at Boston and proceeded to Canso, in Nova Scotia, to await the covering squadron of 4 line-of-battle and other ships under Commodore Warren.

On the 28th April the whole force arrived in Gabarus Bay, to the south-westward and within four miles of the fortifications of Louisbourg. The troops were immediately landed, being covered from the attack of a detachment sent to resist the landing by the

* Entick, p. 787, note.

fire of some of the lighter vessels. The troops now marched directly on Louisbourg, while Warren blocked the entrance to the harbour and cut off all chance of reinforcement and supply, capturing on this service many store-ships and one French line-of-battle ship, which was loaded with military stores.* Warren had been joined by three more sail of the line, and was thus an absolute master of the sea. The land forces making successful progress with full supplies coming to them from Gabarus Bay, Warren determined to push in upon the harbour, and for that purpose made arrangements for a sudden storming of the Island battery. The boats were caught in a dense fog on the first attempt, and were obliged to desist after alarming a garrison said to consist of only fourteen men. Before a second attack could be made, the French had so largely reinforced the Island battery that when the operation was attempted the British were beaten off with severe loss. A single night's work, however, sufficed to erect a battery near the

* Entick gives the following description of Louisbourg at the time:—"The port of Louisbourg, or English harbour, is but a league distant by sea from the Bay of Gabarus, and one of the best in all America; being about four leagues in circumference, and having in every part of it seven fathoms water. The anchorage is good, and ships may run ashore on the sands without danger. The entrance is not above 400 yards broad, between two small isles, and is known twelve leagues off at sea by the Cape of Larembec (? Loran Head), which lies a little to the N.E. In the N.E. part of the harbour was a fine careening wharf for men-of-war to heave down, and very safe from all winds. On the opposite shore were the fishing stages, with room for 2,000 boats, to make their fish; and on the starboard side of the harbour, going in, was a light-house, on a high rocky point, which might be distinguished on a clear night five leagues off at sea. The city was built on a point towards the sea, on the south side of the harbour, and was improved with fortifications that cost upwards of two millions of livres in building. The streets are regular and broad, principally composed of stone houses, with a spacious citadel on the western part of the town, near the ramparts, erected for the security of the land side. . . . The greatest extent of the city is from the citadel to the eastern gate, called the Duke de Penthièvre, which is more than half a mile; and to walk round all the ramparts, mounted with heavy cannon, was at least two miles and a quarter. The road from the town to the country is by the western gate, over a drawbridge, where was a circular battery of 16 guns, 24-prs., seated on and commanding the upper part of the harbour. Between this and the eastern gate was the Iron battery, mounting 30 guns. Opposite to this was the Grand battery of 35 42-prs., which commanded both the entry and all the bay; and at the mouth of the harbour was the Island battery, of 34 42-prs. The walls, ramparts, and bastions of the city, had 148 embrasures, though only 64 cannon were mounted; but there were 10 mortars of 13-in. bore, and 6 of 9-in.; and the garrison consisted of 1,200 regular soldiers, under the command of M. Chambon. But the fortifications on the land side were not entirely finished at the time of the siege, there being no outworks, glacis, or covered way. Besides, though the bastions and curtains were of masonry to the summit, which was 36 feet above the field, yet these, and the quoins and embrasures were cemented with such indifferent mortar that they were unable to resist the fury of a strong and continual battery." P. 803, note.



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lighthouse, which commanded both the Island battery and the entrance to the harbour, and was of the greatest service to the besiegers.

Meantime, the failing ammunition and stores of the British were replenished from over sea to Gabarus Bay, and news of further reinforcements to arrive immediately was received, side by side with intelligence that the French squadron at Brest intended for the relief of the place was masked by a sufficient British naval force. On the other hand, the command of the sea by their enemy was bringing distress to the besieged. Deserters told the English commanders of great shortness of food and ammunition, while four ships carrying relief were captured by Commodore Warren's ships. His naval force was again reinforced, so that by June 11th he was at the head of 4 60-gun, 1 50-gun, and 5 40-gun ships, beside a crowd of smaller vessels. The fire was constant from all the British batteries, and by the 14th preparations for a general assault were nearly completed, when on the 15th the governor offered to capitulate, and terms being arranged, the French flag was struck on the 17th, and the British entered into possession.

The siege had lasted 47 days, during which time 9,000 shot and 600 shell had been fired into the place, causing a loss to the garrison of 240 killed, while the loss to the besiegers was only 100. The capture of the place is one of the best examples of successful co-operation between land and sea forces, each confining itself to its normal sphere of action. Its plan was, indeed, of the essence of all the teaching of naval war, and is in some sort paralleled by the more modern instance of Sevastopol, with the substantial difference that the Crimean port received supplies overland which were denied to Louisbourg. It will be observed that Vernon's plan of attack on St. Jago de Cuba was identical with that adopted against Louisbourg, where an undefended port was seized as a base for the land forces to act from, and the fleet operated doubly, as keeping communication open to that base, and closing the sea communications of the place to be attacked. To a certain extent we are also reminded of the operations of the Federals against the Confederate port of Charleston, and of the admitted mistake which was there made of bringing the fleet itself into contact with batteries and works, instead of reaching them through land forces supplied from the sea.

The clear necessity that there should be command of the sea on the side of the attacking party is well demonstrated by the opera-

tions against Louisbourg. Had the squadrons destined to relieve the place not been masked by a British force off Brest, the mere fear of its approach would have paralyzed Commodore Warren's arrangements, and the care that was taken to reinforce him showed a consciousness of the fact on the part of the British Government. It is evident that had a superior French naval force arrived, Warren must either have abandoned the troops landed altogether, or else he would himself have been shut up with them in Gabarus Bay, to be besieged in turn by the garrison of Louisbourg.

This place was given back to the French at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, but in 1758 it was again attacked by the British under Admiral Boscawen for the sea, and Generals Amherst and Wolfe for the land forces. The method pursued was identical with that of thirteen years before. The assemblage and landing was in Gabarus Bay, and Boscawen acted as Warren had done. The only differences were that the landing was opposed by troops covered by some works, and that there being line-of-battle and other ships in the harbour, the French took some of them to block the entrance, and Boscawen carried two others in a boat attack.

The landing began on June 2nd, 1758, and the place surrendered on July 17th, the siege having thus lasted within two days of the term occupied in the former siege. As in 1745, the garrison of 1758 had hoped vainly for relief from the sea, which was, as before, stopped by the British on the coast of France. But things had gone farther this year than in 1745. Boscawen sailed from England with his expedition on the 19th of February. On the 11th of March Hawke sailed with 7 sail of the line and 3 frigates, with the direct purpose of destroying in Aix Roads the very reliefs which M. de Drucourt, the Governor of Louisbourg, had hoped might reach him. He drove the 5 sail of the line there on shore and forced them to throw overboard their guns and stores in order to escape him.*

It had been intended to attack Louisbourg the year before, but the presence of 18 French sail of the line in those waters effectually barred all attempts of the kind. So it may be said that the fall of Louisbourg was brought about by Hawke in 1758, as it had been by Martin in 1745, neither officer quitting Europe, but operating to maintain the British command of the sea at Cape Breton.†

* Schomberg, vol. i., p. 313. Lapeyrouse, vol. ii., p. 437. Troude, vol. i., p. 369.

† In May, however, Count Duchaffault got away from Aix Roads, with 5 sail of the line, bound for Louisbourg *viâ* Martinique. He heard of the fall of the place there. Boscawen's force was 23 sail of the line, 11 frigates, and 7 smaller vessels. The troops

As bearing on the question of the actual value of fortification in naval warfare, it is worthy of remembrance that in 1760 Captain Byron was directed to destroy the Louisbourg fortifications, and that they lay in ruins ever afterwards, although the place never again passed out of our hands.

The withdrawal by Warren of most of the ships from the Leeward Islands left the sea there indifferent, and the arrival of the Chevalier de Caylus (or Cheylus) with a squadron put the command of the sea into the hands of the French and raised much alarm amongst the English Islands. He made no attempt on any territory however, except on the little island of Anguilla, which the garrison successfully defended.

Territorial attacks in the West Indies may be said to have been abandoned almost entirely by both sides during the remainder of the war. As will be shown presently, the defence of British possessions on the other side of the Atlantic were really effected in Europe. But it may be mentioned that in 1748 Port Louis (Hispaniola) was added to the scanty list of places which surrendered to simple bombardment by ships. The batteries defending the place mounted 78 guns, and Rear-Admiral Knowles brought 8 sail of the line, showing a broadside of 257 guns, within pistol-shot of them, and continued to fire upon them for three hours, after which the place capitulated, the British losing 70 in killed and wounded.*

Admiral Knowles seems to have held, in spite of his experiences as a captain under Vernon and after, a greater faith in the direct attack of ships than most of his contemporaries. He proposed to attack St. Jago de Cuba directly, by ships forcing the entrance, a method which was not thought practicable by Vernon. Captain Dent, the officer placed in command of the ships intended for this service, observing a boom across the entrance and ships within it placed to oppose, did not think it prudent to make any attack. He was afterwards tried by court-martial for this failure, but was "most honourably acquitted."†

About the year 1745 naval rivalries began to spring up in the East Indies, which brought into play the principles of naval warfare in regard to territorial attacks which had hitherto been exemplified most perfectly in the West Indies. The French had not

were 14,000. Lapeyrouse, vol. ii., p. 439. Troude, vol. i., p. 352. Schomberg, vol. iv., p. 255.

* It is generally to be noted that war-ships have always been credited with greater powers against forts when it was possible to close with them. The immense numerical superiority of guns sometimes possible under such condition is here well exemplified.

† Schomberg, vol. i., p. 250.

as yet maintained any squadron in those waters, but in order to counterbalance the British force of four sail of the line and two smaller ships under Commodore Barnet, which had been sent thither, the French Government commissioned Commander de la Bourdonnais, Governor of Mauritius and Bourbon, to make up a squadron out of the ships belonging to the French East India Company, and to operate against the English. In May 1746 La Bourdonnais was on the coast of Coromandel with 1 72-gun ship and 8 frigates of from 30 to 38 guns. Barnet had in the meantime died, and the British command descended to Captain Peyton. There was an engagement of a partial character between the two forces on June 25th, but the result was to make the British abandon all idea of further encounters, and to send the squadron to the northward, leaving Madras entirely open to attack.

La Bourdonnais arrived before the place with a considerable body of troops. These were landed south of the town, and proceeded to invest it on the land side, while the French squadron prevented any relief arriving by sea. Madras was in no condition to offer defence to such an attack, and it capitulated in a few days.

The tactics of this attack were what we have seen usually precedent to success; the only note proper to make is that La Bourdonnais had become confident of his command of the sea from his experience of the British commander. We may fairly infer that Peyton was no strategist of the Torrington school, and was not aware that La Bourdonnais could have done nothing, if the British, doubtful of their superiority in action, had kept in a position of observation, and not attacked at all. Peyton having attacked, and having shown clearly by his conduct that he felt himself unable to make a second attempt, La Bourdonnais was justified in assuming that he had the command of the sea.* Besides this, it must be remembered that Peyton had run away to leeward, and by so much deprived himself of any chance of interfering. And again, Madras being an open roadstead, the ships not being specially concerned in the actual attack, were still in a position to meet a hostile fleet without necessarily compelling the land forces to abandon the enterprise. Moreover, it is to be sup-

* Entick, p. 809, makes out that La Bourdonnais, before attacking Madras, had put Peyton to the test by firing on one of the Company's ships in the roads on August 18th, and then passing south to observe whether Peyton would return to defend the place. Also that he heard how Peyton, on receipt of this news, had disappeared from Pulicat, a little to the northward. It was this, according to Entick, that determined La Bourdonnais to make his attack. De Lapeyrouse (vol. ii., p. 359), however, represents La Bourdonnais as always alarmed by the possible interference of Peyton.

posed that even in this case the troops were not in special danger, being able to retreat on their base at Pondicherry.

Rear-Admiral Boscawen had left England at the close of 1747 at the head of an expedition intended to reduce the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, and afterwards to operate for the reduction of Pondicherry. The squadron anchored in Turtle Bay, Mauritius, but the reports were that success was not to be hoped for unless a harbour could be seized, and as the season pressed, Boscawen made sail for India.

The balance of sea power had been reversed by the arrival early in 1747 of Commodore Griffin with 4 sail of the line and a 40-gun ship; and Boscawen found himself in assured command of the sea, when at the head of 9 sail of the line, 2 frigates, and some smaller vessels, the troops were assembled at Fort St. Davids, and marched overland to the attack, while a detachment of the fleet invested the place by sea as usual. The march of 24 miles began on August 8th, and the siege went on till the 6th October, when failure in the attack was admitted, and the troops marched back to Fort St. Davids.

This was the last operation in the East Indies during this war, and there is nothing to be noted about it but the general fact that though command of the sea is required before such an attack can be contemplated, success does not follow its attainment in unbroken sequence. But in the East Indies, as in the West, we see the same general law prevail. Command of the sea must be fought for if it is not admitted, and territorial attacks must cease while this process goes on. They cannot be undertaken at all while the command is in abeyance; but after it is settled, the side that holds it inevitably pushes on to the attack of territory, when success is measured by the power and skilfulness of the attack; the land forces undertaking the active work, while the sea forces support, cover, and supply them.

Coming now to the proceedings at home, so far as they relate to the subject of this chapter, we have to note the beginnings of that deeper naval policy which proposes to guard our distant possessions and to strengthen our distant fleets, not directly and on the spot, but indirectly, and at home. The sources of all naval power are to be found in each nation in not more than two or three commodious sea-ports, which a variety of circumstances have set apart for the purposes of war. In England there were the Thames and Medway, Portsmouth and Plymouth; while France had Brest, Lorient, Rochefort and Aix Roads, and Toulon. Spain had

Ferrol, Cadiz, and Cartagena. Everything that could command the sea came originally out of these ports, and simultaneously with the growing ability to watch them from the outside grew the conception that command of the sea off the coast of America and in the West and East Indies could be preserved by that process. Reinforcements and supplies prepared at Brest might be intercepted in European waters by the superior naval power, and the distant British squadrons, though not directly strengthened, would be indirectly kept powerful by the enforced weakness of the enemy.

So we have seen the French force, destined in 1745 to relieve Louisbourg, unable to sail from Brest, Vice-Admiral Martin with a more powerful squadron masking it. In 1747, again, reinforcements and supplies were prepared at Brest to wrest the command of the sea once more from the British in North American and East Indian waters. The British Government sent Anson with 14 sail of the line to intercept them. He met the whole force, amounting, with the transports and store-ships, to 38 sail, on May 3rd, N.W. of Cape Finisterre, and captured all of the men-of-war and many of the other ships. Later in the year, 8 sail of the line, with a convoy, were preparing in Aix Roads for the West Indies. Hawke, with 14 sail of the line, left England in August to intercept them, and he also was successful in meeting them off Cape Finisterre. The French had put to sea on the 6th October; on the 14th they fell into Hawke's clutches, who carried 6 of the 8 line-of-battle ships to Spithead with him.

Notwithstanding the proofs of the general impracticability of cross-raiding when the sea was other than strategically indifferent, which lay behind them in history, the French in 1745, amongst other plans for raising insurrection in favour of the Pretender, formed one of a secret and sudden invasion. The idea was to throw 10,000 troops on shore near Plymouth during a single night, and without any attempt at covering naval force. "But, after much pains had been taken and vast preparations made, it was discovered that it was impossible to transport such a body of troops into England whilst the English remained masters of the Channel." *

In 1746, the French had their opportunity, and got out a great expedition for the recapture of Cape Breton, taking advantage of the momentary concentration of British thought on a design for the capture of Quebec. A squadron of 10 sail of

* Hervey, vol iv., p. 293.

the line, with frigates and smaller vessels, and 78 transports carrying 3,500 troops, left Rochelle on the 22nd June, under command of the Duc d'Enville, bound for a rendezvous in the Bay of Chibouctou (Chedabucto), in the N.E. of Nova Scotia. There was no attempt to intercept this expedition in its complete state, though a blockade of St. Malo, where the transports were prepared, delayed their arrival at Brest from the date fixed, 1st March, to the 15th April. In consequence of this delay, the squadron, which ought to have been assembled in Aix Roads early in April, did not arrive there till 17th May, and did not sail till 20th June, anchoring for a day at Rochelle before finally quitting France.

It was only indirectly to British effort that the failure of this expedition was due. All went well with it till it sighted the coast of Nova Scotia. Then it was overtaken on 13th September by a southerly gale, accompanied by thick fog. By the 27th September only 7 sail of the line, 2 frigates, a fire-ship, a bomb-vessel, and 30 transports had succeeded in gaining the rendezvous. Then general sickness broke out in the ships; the Duke died of apoplexy, and his successor, d'Estourmelles, in a fit of delirium, destroyed himself, and in the end what was left of the expedition returned in a miserable and exhausted state to Brest.*

Meanwhile, in England, the expedition which had been prepared against Quebec was turned against Lorient. It sailed from Plymouth on 14th September, and consisted of 16 sail of the line, with 8 frigates, bomb-ketches, store-ships, and 30 transports carrying 6 battalions of land troops, with "matrosses and bombardiers," in all 5,800 men. The sea commander was Admiral Lestock, who had been tried and acquitted by court-martial four months earlier for misconduct in Mathews's action; the general was Sinclair.

The troops were landed in Quimperle Bay, a few miles from Lorient, on 20th September, and marched next day upon the place. It immediately offered to surrender on terms, but these were rejected, and a very ineffective and ill-arranged siege began. Lestock had intended to bring some of his ships up to take part in the operations, but subsequently changed his mind. Then followed a long story, comprising councils of war, references to the opinion of the engineers, shortness of ammunition, fatigues, sickness, and indiscriminate blame-throwing, after which Sinclair determined that the capture of the place was impracticable, and the troops were re-embarked without interruption, after being a week on shore.

* Entick, p. 812; Schomberg, vol. i., p. 231; Troude, vol. i., p. 309; Lapeyrouse, vol. ii., p. 297.

Yet they left behind them several guns and mortars and much ammunition and stores.*

It is not at all difficult to draw the lesson from these varied events of 1746. Most probably they were drawn by the Government, and the intercepting attacks of Anson and Hawke next year were the consequences. I have said that the British only contributed indirectly to the French failure on the other side of the Atlantic. But they did contribute, by the six weeks' delay which the watch upon St. Malo enforced. It is clear that an expedition which had to be collected at St. Malo, Brest, Aix Roads, and Rochelle, before it was in a state to sail finally, was entirely at the mercy of a superior and alert naval force. There was ample opportunity for falling on it as it collected, as well as when it finally put to sea. Probably the fact that superior force was hovering near might have stopped the sailing altogether, as it had done before. But the English Government was losing sight of the principles of war. It could not properly have thought of the capture of Quebec, if France was at the same time in a position to think of recapturing Louisbourg. If it contemplated an attack on Lorient, it should not have waited, as possibly it did, for the absence of the Brest fleet on the other side of the Atlantic. The sack of Lorient on one side and the loss of Cape Breton on the other was like an exchange of bishops in a game of chess. Bad play, unless there was an object behind it. If England was not strong enough to mask d'Enville's force in Brest, and to cover an attack on Lorient at the same time, she should not have contemplated the latter. France on her side had no prudence in offering Lorient to sack for the sake of recovering Cape Breton. My historians say that the detention of the Quebec expedition, which became the Lorient expedition, was not explained.† Probably the Government became aware of its original strategical error when too late, and made the attack on Lorient as a sort of reprisal for the loss of Cape Breton, which it thereby discounted. The special temptation, beside the sacking of a place which was the entrepôt of East Indian wealth, was the notion of raising the French Protestants of Rochelle to rebellion, an idea which alone gave it any legitimacy as an operation of war under the conditions.

Having now reached the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and having traced closely through so many chapters, and with so few omissions, the history of naval warfare so far as it concerns attacks upon

* Entick, p. 812; Lapeyrouse, vol. ii., p. 308.

Ibid., p. 811; Hervey, vol. iv., p. 302.

territory carried out from the sea, I do not think it will be necessary to pursue that plan further. It was expedient to continue it for some time, in order to show that the exceptions to rule were few and far between. Rule being now in a sense established, I shall content myself with sketching rapidly some of the more prominent and remarkable illustrations of those parts of it which we have seen in operation, so long as the wind was the motive power of ships, and then proceed shortly to examine what history tells us as to the continuance or otherwise of those rules when steam has become the propulsive power, and brought in its train various other new elements.

We come first to the French attack on and ultimate capture of Minorca, an enterprise set on foot by the French before the declaration of war in 1756. In the spring of the year there were 12 sail of the line ready at Toulon, and two or three English at Port Mahon or Gibraltar under Commodore Edgecumbe. By the 10th of April the Marquis de la Gallisonnière, at the head of 12 sail of the line, 6 frigates, and 150 transports, was anchored in Hyères Roads, and nearly ready to put to sea. In the transports 15,000 troops were embarked under the command of the Duc de Richelieu. In two days the expedition put to sea, and on the 18th the ships anchored before Ciudadela in the Island of Minorca.

The English Government had been much more alive to the preparations for invasion understood to be in progress by France as a suitable means of declaring war, than they were to the nearer danger. They had plenty of advices through and from Germany, warning them of what was intended, but it was not till the 6th of April that Admiral Byng left St. Helen's with 10 sail of the line under orders to relieve Minorca if he should find it attacked. Even then the number and the bad condition of the ships showed that Government had no knowledge of the real strength of the French expedition. They got news of its sailing and of its force at the same time, under date April 18th, from Captain Hervey of the *Phœnix* at Villa Franca. Captain Hervey informed the Government that General Blakeney, in command at Minorca, had collected about 5,000 troops and labourers inside Fort St. Philip, and was preparing for full resistance, which Captain Hervey thought he would be able to prolong until the arrival of Byng's relieving force.

Later accounts, of the 21st April, direct from Minorca, soon after reached the Government. The French had landed on the 18th, and had at once possessed themselves of Ciudadela, from

which the English garrison retired. The main body of the army was preparing to invest Fort St. Philip, while detachments were to advance on the town of Mahon, and the fleet was to block up the port by sea.

Richelieu met with no difficulties. The whole enterprise had been arranged and was being carried out on the Louisbourg pattern, and, saving relief from the sea, was as certain of success. Mahon was occupied without a shot having been fired. Fort St. Charles, on the north side of the harbour was attacked from seaward by boats and small vessels specially brought from Toulon. But Fort St. Philip was held to rival Gibraltar in strength, its garrison of

regular troops was said to be from 2,500 to 3,000 men, and there was a general belief in England that it would hold out till Byng arrived, and that all would then be well. No doubt the French were running risks. If Fort St. Philip could hold out till Byng appeared, and if Byng should be even no more than a match for La Gallisonnière, the least they could suffer would be the loss of their whole army. And they had no sufficient reason to believe that their 12 sail of the line could by any possibility be more than a match for the 13 sail of the line which they probably now knew that Byng would bring against them. It was a greater risk than was justified. The proper course would have been to threaten Minorca, and then to

beat the fleet sent to relieve it; after which Minorca would fall as a matter of course, without any risk of losing an army.

Byng arrived at Gibraltar on May 2nd, heard from Edgecumbe the state of affairs at Minorca, joined to his own 10 sail the Commodore's 3, and sailed from Gibraltar on the 8th of May.

On the 19th of May the French army had been just a month landed on the island, and La Gallisonnière, seeing Byng's fleet, sent on shore to borrow 450 men from the army to strengthen his crews. The next day the battle, which cost Byng his cruel condemnation and death, took place. La Gallisonnière had proved more than a match for Byng, just as La Bourdonnais had proved more than a match for Peyton in another quarter of the world ten years before. Byng sailed away for Gibraltar, leaving Minorca to its fate, just as Peyton had sailed away towards Calcutta, leaving Madras to its fate. And on May 30th General Blakeney capitulated, as there was nothing else that he could do.

The lesson, and the rule of war, here lie on the surface again. The fate of a garrison open to attack from a commanded sea is certain if the attack be made properly and with adequate force. It may be postponed by the employment of that citadel form of fortification of which I have spoken in former chapters, and the more impregnable the citadel, the longer will be the delay before the place falls. But if the attacking force is sufficient and properly used, the citadel will be fully invested, and the fact that it is surrounded by water on one side does not affect its position. Commodore Edgecumbe had 3 sail of the line under his command; if he had had 12, the idea of an attack on Minorca could not have been entertained at all. But, on the other hand, the fact that Fort St. Philip was so strong enabled Byng to come in sight of it while the English flag was still flying. Had there been no fortification, Minorca would have succumbed to a much smaller force long before any relief from England could have reached it. But again, it has to be noted that the French might have ravaged and destroyed everything on the island out of range of the guns of St. Philip, and then have sailed away again long before any relief could have appeared.

Minorca, like Louisbourg after its first capture, passed back by the treaty of peace into the hands from which it had been wrested in war. Like Louisbourg it was destined to be a second time attacked by the power in command of the sea, to fall a second time, and not again during the war to come back to the hands which only from want of command of the sea had failed to hold it.

In 1780, 1781, and 1782, the pressure on the resources of the United Kingdom in defending herself against France and Spain in alliance with her revolted colonies, while attempting to recover lost ground and to prevent revolt spreading farther, strained them near to breaking point.*

Her possessions were attacked in the East and West Indies, and in the Mediterranean simultaneously. The Mediterranean Sea at that time was of least importance to her, and she gave up all idea of maintaining her command there, not by choice, but by necessity. Her two possessions in those waters, Gibraltar and Minorca, were in no way necessary to her defence, unless that defence was transferred to the shores of France and Spain. It may now be a question whether the East and West Indies could not have been better defended in Europe than they could possibly be in those distant waters; and whether prevention would not have been better than cure. But the choice was made the other way, and it left the fortresses of Gibraltar and of St. Philip in Minorca a drag on resources to which they contributed nothing. They were useful only as bases and depôts for operations, either active or passive, carried on against the coasts of France and Spain. If there were no such operations, Gibraltar and Minorca were for the time a trouble and a nuisance only. But they were great posts, strongly fortified and garrisoned; the loss of either of them would not only seriously affect the prestige of the nation, and encourage her

* The following table exhibits with fair accuracy the distribution of our line-of-battle ships in 1778, 1779, 1780, 1781 and 1782. The stations were so continually exchanging their forces, and ships attending convoys passing and repassing so frequently, that no list would be absolutely correct which did not refer to a particular day:—

	Home Waters.	West Indies.	North America.	Mediterranean.	East Indies.	Total.
1778 Summer	48	14	12	1	2	77
,, Winter	43	23	11	2	1	80
1779 Summer	43	30	10	2	8	93
,, Winter	42	30	10	2	8	92
1780 Summer	43	33	17	2	7	102
,, Winter	35	50	14	1	7	107
1781 Summer	39	44	19	1	12	115
,, Winter	38	52	14	1	14	119
1782 Summer	35	59	12	1	22	129
,, Winter	29	49	26	1	22	127

Notwithstanding these evidently gigantic efforts we were almost everywhere met by equal forces of the enemy, and often had to retire before superior force, while we lost besides our American Colonies, the Islands of Grenada, Tobago, St. Christopher's, Monserrat and Minorca, and surrendered Trincomalee.

enemies, but would to some extent render more difficult any transfer of the seat of war to Mediterranean coasts. Of the two places, Minorca was by far the most important. Gibraltar never had been, and never could be, so good a base to operate from as Minorca. Geographically it was too far from the French coast, while Minorca was placed nearly midway between Toulon and Cadiz. The anchorage at Gibraltar was contracted and detestable. Ships could not water there, and possible wharf space was very confined. It was attackable by land, and might be captured by land forces without the necessity of any covering navy. Minorca, on the other hand, possessed one of the finest harbours in the world. It was impossible to attack it by land forces alone unless the command of the sea were first assured. It was capable of producing much that was wanted for the refreshment and supply of ships' companies, exhausted and worn by watching enemy's ports. But unquestionably the prestige belonged to the least worthy place—Gibraltar. Minorca had passed into and out of our hands, and it and we were used to it. True, the loss of it had led to the death of a great commander by the hands of the executioner, but then Gibraltar had never yet been successfully attacked. However narrow the issue had been, naval force had always appeared in time to prevent the final catastrophe. The habit of defending Gibraltar had been formed, that of defending Minorca had not been formed. Probably a great deal more money had been spent on the local defences of Gibraltar than on those of Minorca, and quite possibly instinctive reasoning confused value and cost. Lastly Gibraltar could be relieved by a naval force which need not be absent from the English Channel for more than two months and a half.* A fleet relieving Minorca might expect to be absent twenty days longer.† All these things together tended to concentrate attention on Gibraltar as a place that might be saved, and to leave Minorca to the chapter of accidents.

It was with no willingness that any piece of territory was to be parted with, but there was a dire necessity about it which had to be faced. Grenada in the West Indies had already gone. The newly restored port of Savannah, and province of Georgia, had been almost successfully attacked by forces under cover of the

* The relieving fleet of 1780 left Portsmouth on 26th December 1779, and sailed from Gibraltar on February 13th 1780. The second relief sailed on March 13th 1781, and returned on May 21st. The third relief sailed on September 11th 1782, and returned November 15th.

† Byng, sailing from Gibraltar on May 8th, was not off Port Mahon till the 19th. Lord St. Vincent, leaving Gibraltar on May 12th 1799, reached Minorca on May 20th.

same French fleet which had covered the capture of Grenada, and successfully faced Admiral Byron afterwards. In the East Indies troubles had not yet come, but they were certain. At home a British line-of-battle ship had been captured in sight of Plymouth, and a 40-gun frigate in sight of Scarborough.

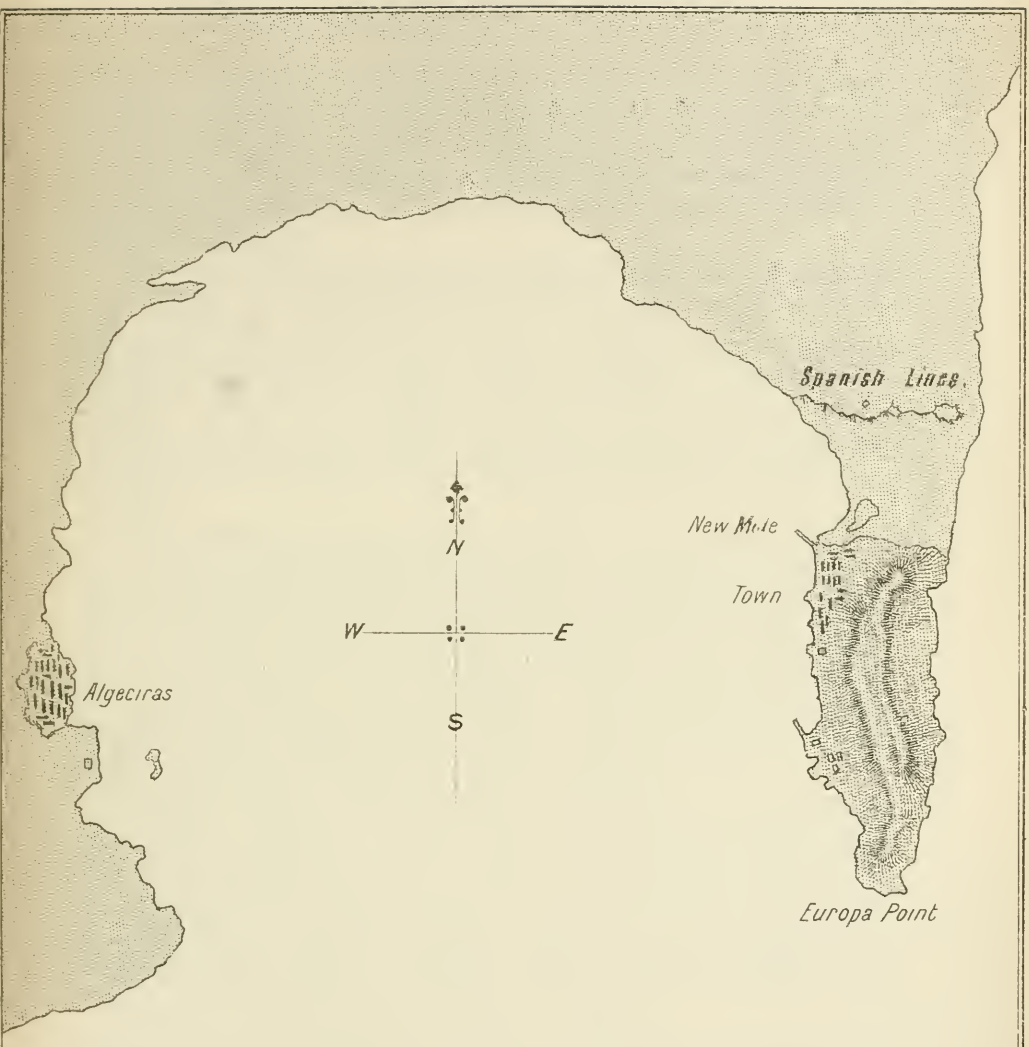
Besides all this, towards the close of the year 1779, Gibraltar, invested by land and sea, was guarded from any relief by a Franco-Spanish fleet of 24 sail of the line to operate from Brest, and 35 sail of the line to operate from Cadiz.

With the coolness and the boldness which then generally characterized the action of the navy, Sir George Rodney was despatched from the Channel in the last days of December at the head of 15 sail of the line, escorting an immense convoy of troop-ships, store-ships, and victuallers, with directions to throw reinforcements and supplies into Gibraltar and Minorca, and then to proceed to reinforce the British power in the West Indies with the greater part of his fleet. He had the fortune which favours the brave. Off Cape Finisterre he fell in with a great convoy of the enemy destined for Cadiz, and captured it. An opportune gale of wind had caused the separation of the Cadiz fleet, and left Don Juan de Langara off Cape St. Vincent with only 11 sail of the line. Rodney fell upon them and captured or destroyed all but four of them. The Brest fleet was too sluggish in its operations to thwart the briskness of Rodney, and he took his convoy and his prizes safe into Gibraltar Bay on January 27th. He at once passed his supplies into that fortress, and despatched those for Minorca under convoy of 3 line-of-battle ships.*

So Gibraltar, invested, and in considerable straits, was again free, and relieved of all immediate danger. Minorca was not as yet seriously threatened, and Rodney proceeded for the West Indies in the middle of February.

It is not possible to say what might have now happened to Gibraltar, had the whole naval power of the enemy been launched and sustained against it. But no attempt of this kind was yet made. Other concerns, indeed, employed the naval enemy. In April, Don Josef Solano sailed with 12 line-of-battle ships, several frigates, and 83 transports, carrying 11,460 troops for the support of the allied power in the West Indies. The 31 sail of the line which still remained at Cadiz, contented themselves with making

* Admiral Barcelo, who was blockading Gibraltar with 4 or 5 ships of the line, some frigates and a number of galleys and gun-boats, retired under the guns of Algeciras on Rodney's approach.



SKETCH PLAN

OF

GIBRALTAR.

IN 1812.

Scale of Miles

BRETTELL, 21, RUPERT ST LONDON, W

cruises to the northward and westward, with the view of destroying British convoys, or possibly of intercepting relieving forces. On 18th July they were joined by 5 more French sail of the line, and on the 9th of August, this great force being at sea, captured, and afterwards carried into Cadiz, no less than 55 ships of British East and West Indiamen.

But France was feeling that something bolder and more trenchant than this waiting game was now within her power, and hoped that the assemblage at Cadiz, ostensibly acting against Gibraltar, might be turned against Jamaica. International jealousies brought the project to an end, and on the 3rd of January, 1781, the French squadron, now commanded by d'Estaing, and probably of 19 or 20 sail of the line, was back at Brest.

The blockade of Gibraltar had been taken up by Don Barcelo again, the moment Rodney disappeared. Cordova was by way of preventing its second relief, with about 30 sail of the line at Cadiz. The only really active operations against the place were conducted on the land side by Mendoza, and these were pushed on with great vigour and perseverance. From the direct attack Gibraltar was suffering little; from the sea blockade it was suffering much, and a second relief was arranged.

On March 13th, 1781, Vice-Admiral Darby sailed from Spithead with a convoy of 200 sail of victuallers and store-ships, nearly half of which were for the relief of Gibraltar, and of which the escort was no less than 29 sail of the line, with 12 frigates and small vessels. It was practically the whole of the home force, but nothing short of such a display could insure the safety of a fortress, so far impregnable to all but famine.*

* "So early as the preceding month (October, 1780), their wary and provident governor found it necessary to make a reduction of a quarter of a pound from each man's daily allowance of bread. Their quantity of meat was likewise reduced to a pound and a half in the week; and that became, latterly, so bad as to be scarcely eatable. . . . Of the most common and indispensable necessaries of life, bad ship biscuit, full of worms, was sold at a shilling a pound; flour, in not much better condition, at the same price; old dried pease at a third more; the worst salt, half dirt, the sweepings of ships' bottoms and store-houses, at eighteenpence; old Irish salt butter at half-a-crown; the worst sort of brown sugar brought the same price; and English farthing candles were sold at sixpence apiece.

But fresh provisions bore still more exorbitant prices. Even when the arrival of vessels from the Mediterranean opened a market, turkeys sold at £3 12s. apiece; sucking-pigs at two guineas; ducks at half a guinea; and small hens sold at nine shillings apiece. A guinea was refused for a calf's pluck, and £1 7s. asked for an ox-head. To heighten every distress, the firing was so nearly exhausted as scarcely to afford a sufficiency for the most indispensable culinary purposes."—*Annual Register* for 1782, pp. 99–100. Beatson, vol. v., p. 337.

Darby arrived off Gibraltar on April 12th, and the next day he sent in the victuallers and transports, of which he had 97, under the escort of a detachment of 4 sail of the line and some frigates under Sir John Lockhart Ross; 13 store-ships and victuallers, under convoy of 2 frigates, were at the same time sent on to Minorca. "From the moment in which Admiral Darby's fleet came in sight of the fortress, the Spaniards opened all their batteries, hoping by their tremendous cannonade and bombardment to prevent the store-ships and victuallers from approaching the rock. Perhaps nothing more awfully loud was ever heard before. A hundred and seventy pieces of cannon and eighty mortars disgorging at once their horrid contents on such a narrow spot, made the beholders imagine that not the works only but the rock itself, was in danger of destruction. The enemy continued this astonishing fire, night and day, for a considerable time, without intermission; and the garrison returned it with the most undaunted and persevering resolution."* The chief work of the blockade had been carried on by means of gun-boats, under oars, of which the Spaniards had constructed a considerable number. During the continuance of the convoy in the bay, about 20 of these craft used to issue from Algeciras every morning, taking advantage of the early calm, and displayed the greatest and most successful audacity in attacking the convoy and its covering ships. But by the 19th of April all the store-ships were cleared, and the coal-ships sunk inside the Mole to be weighed when wanted, and the Admiral made sail for England.†

Meantime the whole military power of Spain was concentrated on the isthmus which connects the rock of Gibraltar with the mainland, 170 guns of the largest calibre, and 80 mortars, protected by stupendous works, poured their fire into the place, hurting the actual works but little, but leaving the town a wreck and uninhabitable. It was computed by the garrison that in the first three weeks of this attack the Spaniards must have expended 100,000 lbs. of gunpowder and from 4,000 to 5,000 shot and shell in every twenty-four hours. But after discharging 75,000 shot and 25,000 shell at this rate, it was lowered to 600 projectiles a day, and so continued for several weeks.‡ But the loss to the garrison, on account of the protection afforded by casemates, was small. From April 12th to the end of June only 53

* Beatson, vol. v., p. 344.
† *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 348.
‡ *Annual Register*, 1782, p. 104.

officers and men were killed and 260 wounded. So the siege proceeded with great expenditure on the one side,* and, now that provisions abounded, little hurt on the other.

But now, in despair with Spanish delays, as they appeared to France, the latter proposed a determined attack on Minorca. Spain agreed, and on June 23rd, 18 sail of the line, commanded by de Guichen, arrived at Cadiz from Brest, and were placed by their commander under the orders of Cordova. In a month, a combined fleet of 49 sail passed out of Cadiz, escorting an army of 10,000 men. On the 25th July Cordova, agreeably to his orders, detached the transports with the army, under convoy of 2 line-of-battle ships and some frigates, while he himself returned towards the entrance to the English Channel.

The progress of the army and its escort was so slow that it only got sight of the island on the 18th August. The former landing, it may be remembered, had taken place at Ciudadela; but it was now held that that was a blunder, as the garrison of the island were not taken by surprise, and had time to collect into the citadel of Fort St. Philip. The plan now was to land only a detachment at Ciudadela and to land the main body in two parts, one three or four miles to the north, and the other three or four miles to the south of Port Mahon.† So far as it was a surprise, the plan failed, for there was plenty of time to draw in most of the outlying garrisons and to secure a certain amount of provisions. But Fort St. Philip was securely invested by land and sea, and the Duc de Crillon, who was in command of the Allies, leisurely sat down before it, sending to Barcelona for reinforcements and stores in order to press on the siege. Six thousand additional troops presently arrived from Toulon, and the total force ultimately employed came to 16,000 men, with 109 pieces of battering cannon and 36 large mortars. The opposing garrison was no more than about 2,700, all told. It was about half the strength necessary to man the works.

The blockade of the harbour was not complete. It was so incomplete that, though the enemy was in possession of all its shores, General Murray, the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, was able to send a detachment in boats by night to beat up the Duc de Crillon's quarters at Mola. And the British Consul at Leghorn was able to pass several ships into Fort St. Philip with supplies, and even with recruits.

* The estimated cost of the ammunition expended was £10,000 a day.

† The spots are marked by crosses on the sketch plan.

The enemy was so leisurely that he did not open his batteries till November 11th, after which date they kept up a heavy fire, without, however, at first doing much damage to the works. The garrison replied with spirit and success; but it was evident that an end must come if no relief appeared from the sea. And no relief could come. Minorca, with only half, or less than half, the garrison of Gibraltar, and without its prestige, could not draw the whole of the English home fleet to its succour,* and nothing was left but to hold out as long as it was possible.

Leaving a commanded sea behind him, and the investment and siege of Gibraltar and Fort St. Philip in serene and uninterrupted progress, Cordova consulted as to the feasibility of attacking Darby at anchor in Torbay. He had all the numerical superiority necessary, and only the prestige of the English navy prevented its being done. It is impossible to say what the tremendous historical consequences of such an attack might have been had it succeeded; but it was so near that when de Guichen returned to Paris it was difficult to preserve him from a mob, because he had not enforced the opinion in favour of an attack which he was known to hold.

The Duc de Crillon proceeded with the siege of Fort St. Philip. It was well provisioned with all that could be stored, and though the fire of the enemy was now beginning to tell, in injuring the works, dismounting the guns, and in one case destroying a great magazine of provisions, yet little impression was made on the strength or *moral* of the garrison so far. But scurvy began to show itself, and a closer sea blockade stopped the entry of fresh vegetables. The general health of the garrison began to fail, and the end drew nigh. Fever and dysentery set in above the scurvy, and the defenders were becoming *hors de combat* by the indirect, though not by the direct, efforts of the besiegers. But they held out. They died in the guard-rooms and on their posts as sentries, and by the beginning of February 1782 only 660 men were fit for duty, and of these only 100 were untainted with disease.

On February 4th General Murray offered to capitulate, and the decrepit garrison marched out with all the honours of war.

The fall of Minorca caused the Spanish Government to hope for the best from a simultaneous attack on Gibraltar by land and sea. The nature of the attack is too well known to need recapitulation here. But it must be pointed out that while the land part of it was in ordinary form, the sea part was chiefly carried out by

* The garrison of Gibraltar, when Darby turned his back on it, was 6,133. Beatson, vol. v., p. 349.

specially prepared engines of war. It is only of antiquarian value to inquire how those engines were constructed. They never were, and never will be, repeated. It is enough to know that when brought face to face with the works on September 13th, 1782, they failed utterly and ignominiously, and that Gibraltar after the attack remained just as strong as it was before. But no stronger. It was impregnable to direct attack—so, apparently, was Fort St. Philip. But it would fall to the indirect attack of famine, as Fort St. Philip did, unless the whole naval power of England were once more put forth to save it. Lord Howe sailed on September 11th at the head of 34 sail of the line, besides frigates and small vessels. He escorted a great fleet of store-ships and victuallers, and carried two regiments in transports for recruiting the garrison. Lord Howe was the usual month in reaching the fortress, and heard on his way that the combined fleet of 40 sail of the line was ready to receive him. With some difficulty, owing to the bad navigation of most of the convoy, and in safety, owing to the sufferings of the Franco-Spanish fleet in a recent gale, and to their want of enterprise, Lord Howe threw all his supplies into Gibraltar; but he was during the whole time, as it were, facing the enemy's fleet; and so pressing was his condition that some of the officers of the garrison on a mission to the fleet were carried into the Atlantic and could not be landed. Ready to face and to fight the numerically superior force, Howe was not disposed to do it in the confined waters at the eastern entrance to the straits. He passed out of the Mediterranean 34 sail of the line strong; he was followed by a fleet apparently 44 sail strong, which brought him to a partial engagement, but sheered off when Howe appeared prepared for closer quarters.

This was the third and last relief of Gibraltar. I have combined it and the proceedings relating to its attack and defence, with the second fall of Minorca, led up to again by the first fall of that fortress, because all the operations seem to tell the same tale, and to be inseparable in principle, both the one and the other being those with which these chapters have made us familiar.

Gibraltar, and Fort St. Philip at Minorca, were but those citadel fortresses which I have described in a previous chapter as being universally employed. But Gibraltar differed from Minorca, and from most sea-faced citadels, inasmuch as owing to the narrowness of its land face and the impregnability of one of its sea faces it was unapproachable except at enormous disadvantages. In no case could it be subject to a full cross fire such as an ordinary fortress

regularly invested by land expects to be. The idea of breaching it in a regular way from the land side was almost hopeless. In such a condition its close attack by an overwhelming fire from line-of-battle ships was known to be at least exceedingly hazardous, but the form of attack—which Sir George Rooke had used for its first capture—was not employed. If we ask, Why not? we must no doubt answer, Because of the wholesome fear of stone walls with which most naval authorities were imbued; but, more, we are safe in saying, Because the Franco-Spanish command of the sea was precarious. The Allies were able to make themselves masters of Minorca, and to drive Gibraltar to excessive straits. But as what was going on in the East and West Indies and North America permitted the attacks on these strongholds, so the presence intact of a fleet of 30 or 40 sail of the line in Southern European waters was that which governed affairs in these distant parts of the world. Let but the Franco-Spanish home fleet meet with complete defeat, and the strain which England was suffering would be relaxed. It was the necessities of her home naval affairs which drove her into such naval difficulties abroad, even as it was the pressure of her affairs abroad that made her home difficulties. For her enemies to throw themselves against the stone walls of Gibraltar might win Gibraltar—possibly. But what would a disabled fleet do against the intact British one, even numerically inferior? But in the cases of both Gibraltar and Minorca, the strength was not in the attack, but in the investment. Supplies were withheld from Fort St. Philip, and it fell. They were not withheld from Gibraltar; they were thrown in at the risk of the United Kingdom, and to some extent it may be said that the American Colonies and Gibraltar were weighed against one another, and the American scale went up. When Darby was passing out of the Channel to relieve Gibraltar, de Grasse was passing out to attack us on the other side of the Atlantic. At the time it was debated, and at the time it was doubted, whether the real rule of war was followed when Darby avoided him.*

Gibraltar was therefore on all grounds exceptional, and it held out because it was so. Minorca fell under the general rule, and passed into the enemy's hands, who absolutely commanded the surrounding sea. There was nothing peculiar about it, and it was attacked according to rule. As if to emphasize the maxims which were now accepted, the great naval force which was necessary, if

* See *Annual Register*, 1782, p. 102. Darby sailed on March 13th, and de Grasse sailed on March 22nd.

Minorca was to be attacked at all, never even sighted the island. Now, and after all experience more than ever, was the attack on a port a military and not a naval affair. Now, and more than ever in the cases of Gibraltar and Minorca, was it seen how powerless the navy was in direct attack, how all-powerful in defence, and in indirect attack.

And again we are brought face to face with the two or three prominent points which concerned the objects and uses of fortifications. The citadel form in both cases showed its power of delay, and showed at the same time that it had no other power. A day after the troops landed, Minorca fell without opposition, and all the stores and appliances of the arsenal fell with it. Were philosophy permissible in war, the Allies might have captured Fort St. Philip nearly as soon, had it simply been invested out of the range of its guns. Gibraltar did not fall, just because it could not be invested for a long enough time, but also because troops could not be landed out of range of the batteries. Fortification so far has all that the range of its guns give it, but no more; and when it can be invested and opposed by fortification, it falls whether or no for want of supply.

Still we seem to see that those who made our history for us looked to their fortifications to serve the purposes of delay only, and not really of defence.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea succeed or fail—(*continued*).

The war of American Independence prolific in strategical lessons.—But in the methods of attack there is no difference.—Fewer lessons can be drawn from the events of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, because the attacks on territory were generally based on the supposed alliance with part of the populations.—Lord Howe and d'Estaing at Sandy Hook.—The relief of Newport.—Junction of Byron and Howe forces d'Estaing to the West Indies.—Barrington's attack on St. Lucia.—D'Estaing's interference and Barrington's defence.—Reflections on the defective strategy on both sides.—Byron's strategical error in quitting his watch on the French fleet.—D'Estaing's capture of Grenada, and Byron's failure to relieve or recover the island.—Rodney's capture of St. Eustatia.—More perfect strategy of de Grasse against Rodney.—Misapprehension as to Hood's position off Fort Royal.—De Grasse's attack on and repulse from St. Lucia.—Success against Tobago.—Rodney paralyzed.—Suffren and Hughes in the East Indies, and the capture of Trincomalee.—Perfect system of the attack upon Belleisle in 1761.

The American War of Independence is, perhaps, more than any other prolific in examples of the influence which command of the sea, and the loss and regaining of that command has on the initiation, the success, or the failure of expeditions carried over sea against ports and islands. The naval forces were more evenly balanced than usual on each side, and such a condition would, under ordinary circumstances, have led to a renewed struggle for the command of the sea similar to that which was carried out between England and Holland in their three great naval wars, or between England and France in their first naval war.

But both in the East and in the West the countries at war were holding territories contiguous, and accessible the one from the other, either by sea or land, or both. The great stake which was immediately played for was the independence or subjection of the North American Colonies of Great Britain, and she was, in consequence, precluded from throwing her whole force against the sea

forces of Spain and France. It might have been higher and better policy for these countries to have fought directly for the command of the sea in European waters, continuing the ill-organized but gigantic effort of 1779 with greater determination and skill. But the more immediate and natural desire on the part of Spain to recover the great trophy of Gibraltar, and the necessity that lay upon France to succour directly the revolted English Colonies, together with the desire of increasing her holding in India, threw the Allies into a kind of naval war in which the attack and defence of territory became a primary object. The main point was to place at the proper times, in the proper localities, naval forces great enough to succour places which were defending themselves, or to cover attacks on the enemy's positions.

In the West Indies and North America, the influence of season compelling the withdrawal for a time of nearly all naval force from the southern islands to the Northern Continent, and *vice versâ*, and the double duty thrown on the forces on each side, of attacking and defending territories in close proximity, put actual command of the sea more or less hopelessly into the background, until the great victory of Rodney, in April 1782, sent the British scale of force permanently up. But in the distant Bay of Bengal, where reinforcements could only arrive at very long intervals after they had been asked for, the sea forces were about as evenly matched as they had been a century before in the North Sea. And there both sides showed themselves aware that all attacks on territory over a doubtfully commanded sea are, at best, chance-work; five great and drawn battles were fought between Sir Edward Hughes and Suffren simply for the command of the sea, which was never gained by either side.*

Yet I must dwell for a short space in these waters, over one of the most perfect exercises of naval strategical ability which is left on historical record. The capture of Trincomalee by Suffren was a most admirable illustration of what can be done in the successful attack on territory from the sea, if the time-limit is thoroughly understood and properly calculated; while, on the other hand, the exceeding narrowness of the limit shown is a warning as to the risks run under such conditions.

We have seen that the method of attack by expeditions over sea had long been established, and that the idea of capturing ports or islands by naval forces alone was almost entirely out of view. The

* The same characteristic had been exhibited in the former war in these waters, where Pocock and d'Aché set the example afterwards followed.

experience of a century, marked by only one or two successes and many failures of ships against works, and almost uniform successes of troops covered and supplied by ships when numerically sufficient and properly handled, had quite settled the plans of attack. Only extraneous causes, such as want of troops or disbelief in the enemy's strength, could lead to occasional departures from the established form. Therefore, as the motive powers and the weapons were similar to what had preceded them, we ought not to expect to draw any special lessons from the territorial attacks in the American War, or in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars with France, touching the method of attack. We have, in fact, drawn all those lessons already. But we shall find some useful illustrations as to the indirect influence of naval force, or even to its direct effect in covering, sustaining, or interfering with attacks upon territory.

There is, however, at least one operation during the War of American Independence to which special attention must be drawn, on account of the very remarkable significance of its lesson. Charleston in South Carolina was twice attacked by expeditions over sea during the American War of Independence. The first of these attacks failed; the second succeeded. Charleston was again twice attacked in the American Civil War, when the first attack failed, and the second succeeded. Between the two pairs of attacks eighty-seven years had rolled, and the whole face of naval warfare had changed. Steam power had superseded sail power; the shell had superseded the shot; iron had to a great extent superseded wood; and iron armour was adopted as the clothing of ships. Yet, according to the example, the rule of war which governed success and failure in attack had undergone no change. In 1776 and in 1863, ships alone failed to capture the place; in 1780 and in 1864, troops supported by ships in the usual way succeeded.

Otherwise, the one or two illustrations which I propose to draw from operations on the other side of the Atlantic during the War of American Independence, will have reference less to the form of attack than to the strategical causes which led to projecting such enterprises, and to their ultimate failure or success. We shall, in short, from one or two other examples, gain some confirmation of those views to which the examples of Louisbourg and Minorca had led us.

The French Revolutionary War, though marked on its outbreak by many remarkable successful and unsuccessful attacks upon

territory, is somewhat barren of the lessons conveyed by former wars, for the reason that political causes, as much or more than military ones, governed the initiation as well as the issues of nearly all these struggles. And this was the case equally in home waters in the East and West Indies, at the Cape, and in the Mediterranean.

The state of semi-insurrection in which Ireland found itself determined the efforts of Hoche and Morard de Galles upon Bantry in 1796, the landing of General Humbert in Killala Bay, and the more thoroughly abortive design of Bompart against Lough Swilly in 1798. So did the divided condition of the people of France encourage the disastrous descent of the Emigrés at Quiberon Bay in 1795. So did Corsica pass into the hands of the British, and out of them in 1794 and 1796.

The reduction of the different ports in Ceylon in 1795–96 was undertaken in view of a presumed difference in political opinion amongst the Dutch possessors of the island, and the summonses to surrender assumed a willingness on the part of portions of the garrisons to revolt against the dominant Republican faction. At the Cape of Good Hope, when it fell to the British in 1795, there may have been less dependence on political division, and more on the weakness of the Dutch garrison, but still the political cause was there.

In the West Indies, every island was politically divided against itself, and advantage of this circumstance was taken in 1794 by the expedition under Admiral Sir John Jervis, and General Sir C. Grey, that remarkable instance of union between the commanders of the sea and land forces which made a clean sweep of the French possessions.

Thus, although all the conditions of military success which we have seen to be necessary were present in the attacks by which French ports were wrested from the hands that held them, some dependence was always placed on the military support which it was supposed might be drawn from the political feeling of a portion of the population. When this feeling turned, or was suppressed by a majority of opponents, the military force which had been supplied was found insufficient, and the places fell back again into the hands of the French Republicans.

The surrender of Toulon by the French Royalists to Lord Hood was an exaggerated instance of the principles now set forth. The idea in accepting it was that the political views of the Royalists might dominate, and an insufficient supply of military force to hold

the place was provided. Had it been otherwise, had we recognized the unchanging rules which governed these cases, and sent out a garrison strong enough to hold the place apart from all dependence on politico-military support, resting its supply upon the sea as we had learned to do by Barcelona and other Spanish ports in the War of the Succession, the whole course of European history might have been changed. As it was, the Royalist cause grew weaker and not stronger as had been expected, in the South of France, and Toulon was evacuated by the British as an effect of that miscalculation.

Corsica comes in as an illustration of the same kind. Military force, resting in a great measure on the belief that political opinion in the island was convertible into the same instrument of war, made its conquest. An undue dependence on political opinion left a fleet in the Mediterranean which was unable to hold its own, and a small garrison in the island face to face with a hostile population. The evacuation of the island and of the waters surrounding it was the necessary consequence.

Precisely the same sort of thing went on in the West Indies. In the absence of any naval force to hinder it, and with a section of their populations to assist, Martinique, St. Lucia, Guadaloupe, and several ports in St. Domingo, fell easily in 1794 to the sufficient forces brought against them, though Martinique had resisted insufficient forces the year before. But the British hold on most of these places began to relax from the moment its grasp had closed on them. Guadaloupe was the first to feel the result of dependence on political opinion. Captured on the 20th April, a very small reinforcement of the Republican party thrown in on June 5th, was sufficient, even under the eyes of superior British force, to drive the garrisons out of the island by December 10th. Tiberoon in St. Domingo was recovered by the French in the same way and in the same month of 1794. By June next year, St. Lucia had followed the example set, and the insurrections in St. Vincent, Grenada, and Dominique had well nigh carried those islands.

For these reasons, and because, except in the case of Corsica, the command of the sea was assured, there will be no need to dwell at length on the examples of territorial attacks found in the annals of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. So far as they go, they contradict nothing of all that had gone before in illustration of the rules of naval warfare, and the only new lesson which can be drawn from them is the distrust which ought to

govern all ideas of dependence on political, as convertible into military, power.

But an exception must be made in regard to the great expedition of Napoleon into Egypt, already alluded to in a former chapter,* and this for the reason that the real bearings of the transaction are so often misapprehended at the present day.

Reverting, then, to the War of American Independence, I take, as an example of the power of even inferior sea-forces to prevent the success of territorial attacks, the relief of Newport in 1778.

The story is well told by de Lapeyrouse Bonfils :—

> The Count d'Estaing, after having examined the coast of Virginia, proceeded to the entrance of the Delaware. Contrary to his expectation, he saw neither Howe nor Clinton. Provoked by this accident, which withdrew from him a glorious opportunity, d'Estaing made sail for Sandy Hook. In spite of foul winds, he appeared on July 11th before the port, and at once made preparations for attack.
>
> Howe was at anchor inside the bar with 9 sail of the line, carrying 534 guns, while d'Estaing had with him 12 sail of the line carrying 856.
>
> Howe, surprised and ill-placed, found it impossible to offer a satisfactory resistance. The sole obstacle which met d'Estaing was the bar which connected Long Island and Sandy Hook, and which it was necessary for his ships to pass. At high water the operation was practicable ; the Count d'Estaing promised a hundred thousand crowns to the pilot who would act. The *coup de main* accorded with his character, and he knew that at the opening of a war, such an attack sufficed to draw fortune to the colours. The American pilots, with whom he took too much counsel, either from ignorance on their part, from disaffection, or want of zeal, dissuaded him from the enterprise. They made out that several of his ships drew too much water to pass the bar ; in consequence, d'Estaing weighed his anchors on July 22nd, and dropped them again some miles on the side of New Jersey. He provisioned and reappeared before Sandy Hook. The tide and wind suited to cross the bar, but although daring, the Count d'Estaing wanted that ready audacity which despises the rules of prudence to follow the dictates of genius. As at first, the pilots diverted him from his object.† One consideration, however, appeared to justify his circumspection. The arrival of Vice-Admiral Byron with a powerful fleet had been reported, and might it not have been feared that he would find himself placed between the latter and Admiral Howe? However, the Americans, after the ill-success of the plan arranged at Paris, had fixed their attention on Rhode Island. For the accomplishment of this design, from which they anticipated the most important consequences, the concurrence of Count d'Estaing was considered necessary. Washington and Lafayette undertook to negotiate with the French Admiral, and on his favourable reply, Congress appointed Sullivan to conduct the enterprise.
>
> Count d'Estaing quitted Sandy Hook and stood for Rhode Island, where he arrived on 29th July. Sullivan proceeded to encamp near Providence. D'Estaing first anchored at Brenton's Ledge, five miles from Newport, and occupied the three passes

* Chapter X.

† M. Chevalier (pp. 112, 113) points out that d'Estaing had the passage sounded by one of his officers, who found only twenty to twenty-two feet of water on the bar.

into the river. On the 8th August he got under sail, and, in spite of the fire from the enemy's batteries, penetrated as far as Newport, and entered the bay of Connonicut. On this sudden approach the English were seized with panic, and without dreaming of offering resistance, burnt the frigates *Juno*, *Flora*, *Lark*, *Orpheus*, and *Cerberus*, two corvettes and several magazines.

Meanwhile Admiral Howe, favoured by circumstances, from a defensive passed to an offensive attitude. Byron's squadron, on making the coast of America, was dispersed in a gale of wind. Four of his line-of-battle ships, driven by the gale, made for shelter at Sandy Hook, and reinforced the British squadron there.*

From this moment, Howe, finding himself in strength, and knowing the importance of Rhode Island, prepared to subvert the projects of the Allies. His spies kept him informed of the position which the French squadron had taken up for the attack on Rhode Island. Well understanding those waters, he knew that, where anchored, the French could only weigh with a northerly wind, which during the month of August seldom prevailed on that coast. Howe consequently weighed, and appeared on August 9th off point Judith. The wind blew from the sea; at the moment when he was most certain of the success of his arrangements, it suddenly changed, and blew from the northward.

Count d'Estaing on his part, observed the enemy, and determined to proceed to attack him should the wind allow. When the northerly wind sprang up, d'Estaing hastened to weigh, and with a good breeze from the northward he bore down upon Admiral Howe on the 10th. The latter who, with two ships of the line less than d'Estaing, did not feel himself in a state to accept the battle which his impetuous adversary offered, soon stood away to the southward, in hopes that the wind might come from that quarter, which everything seemed to promise. The two fleets manœuvred for a day and a half, the one to bring about, and the other to avoid, battle. It was now the 11th, towards five o'clock in the evening. A few hours more, and a general action would perhaps decide the fate of America. The wind, which had been freshening since the morning with continual rain, blew hard as the evening wore on, and ended during the night between the 11th and 12th in a terrible gale. Howe, who had his flag in a frigate, the better to direct the movements of his squadron, was separated from it, and his ships found themselves dispersed.

Count d'Estaing was still more unfortunate. The *Languedoc*, which carried him, lost her rudder and all her masts. Others of the French ships suffered much in their masts and rigging. After the gale, which lasted forty hours, dangers not less great threatened some of the ships of our squadron. The *Languedoc*, wandering at the will of the waves, was attacked by the *Preston*. The *Marseillais*, nearly as much damaged, had a brush with the *Renown*. It required all their courage to escape the two adversaries, and the wind having fallen light, all the ships joined Count d'Estaing at Newport.

Under any other circumstances, the route taken by Count d'Estaing would have been proper; but he had received news of the junction of Byron with Howe. This certainly was more than sufficient to prevent him from committing an act of rashness without excuse. In vain his captains implored him to give up the enterprise. The sole reason which he offered in refusal was the word of honour given to Sullivan that he would return to Newport. D'Estaing forgot that in such a case his promise was only relative, and could not bind him; but like all his race he was, so to speak, superstitious on the point of honour, and almost put this chivalrous sentiment above the interests of his

* My author is not quite accurate here. Before the 28th July the *Renown*, 50, had arrived from the West Indies; on the 28th the *Raisonable*, 64, joined from Halifax; and on the 30th the *Cornwall*, 74, and *Centurion*, 50, of Byron's fleet came in. *See* Hervey, vol. v., p. 552.

country. He exposed eight thousand men and twelve ships of the line to satisfy it. However it was, d'Estaing anchored at Rhode Island and saw Sullivan, who informed him of the presence at Sandy Hook of the combined fleets of Howe and Byron. Unable longer to co-operate in the reduction of the place, understanding all the danger of his position a few leagues distant from a fleet much superior in numbers to his own, of which most of the ships were defective aloft, Count d'Estaing informed Sullivan of his intention to proceed to Boston to refit. The American general, who had just received reinforcements, was in despair at the news. "Land," he said to the French Admiral; "you promised. Your departure will hand us over to the English. Land; honour and friendship alike compel you." The Marquis de Lafayette was still more pressing; but the preservation of his squadron was so absolutely bound up with its departure from Rhode Island that Count d'Estaing did not consider it his duty to yield to such solicitations. Besides, the conduct of Sullivan in the matter was not all calculated to retain him. The General, by his proposals as much as by certain equivocal acts, was suspected of having intelligence with the enemy. He did not like the French: and when Count d'Estaing made sail for Boston, he did not fear to outrage our national character in passing the word amongst his troops that the French were traitors; insolence which was repelled with the spirit which it demanded, by the Marquis de Lafayette.

The arrival of the French squadron at Boston, which took place on August 25th, and its retirement from Rhode Island, sowed disunion between the Allies, and was the pretext for many vehement struggles. England gained new partisans in the insurgent provinces, and the raising of the siege of one of her principal fortresses.*

In this example, we see again that the neighbourhood of a superior fleet is destructive of all idea of territorial attack carried on from the sea, even where, as in the case of Newport, the main attack is from the land, and depending on the land for reinforcement and supply. The necessity of d'Estaing's retreat from Newport was made absolute by the junction of Howe and Byron, yet it was a necessity not recognized by either Lafayette or Sullivan, so easily are the fundamental axioms of naval war misunderstood by those who do do not feel their control.

This, however, was the action of a superior naval force. We have to recollect that Newport had already been relieved by the presence of an inferior naval force. It was Howe's smaller fleet which drew away d'Estaing from Newport in the first instance, and could evidently have done it again and again in the same manner. The French account does not credit Howe with any desire to offer battle to d'Estaing, but the English accounts tell us that he intended to risk a battle if he could have the weather guage, and that even failing it he had drawn his fleet into line of battle, and prepared to attack in the leeward position when the fleets were separated by the gale. Had a battle ensued, Newport would still have been relieved, for d'Estaing, even as victor, must have gone to Boston to refit after such a struggle.

* Lapeyrouse, vol. iii., p. 45; *see also* Troude, vol. ii., p. 12; Chevalier, p. 3; Hervey, vol. v., p. 550; Schomberg, vol. i., p. 447.

D'Estaing, however, clearly played a bad game, and deserved to suffer the contumely which the Americans poured upon him. Having Howe safe at Sandy Hook in inferior force, he should never have lost his grip of him when there were designs against Newport. An inferior, or at least an equal force, would have probably been sufficient to mask him in his own awkward position behind a bar, and then d'Estaing might have sent the remainder of his ships to co-operate with Sullivan against Newport, certain that, at least as far as Howe was concerned, there would be no interference from the sea. If, however, d'Estaing had considered that he was not strong enough so to divide his fleet in this way, he should have informed Sullivan of the impossibility of his co-operating at all except by way of masking the English fleet. But had he divided his fleet, or had he confined himself to masking that of Howe, we have seen how fortune might have befriended him. Very possibly he might have made prizes of every one of the four ships which put into Sandy Hook, and reinforced Howe.

It was not till October that Byron had collected sufficient force to attempt the blockade of d'Estaing in Boston, but then a storm again dispersed his ships, and enabled d'Estaing to slip out and proceed to the West Indies.* This he did on November 3rd, and on the same day Commodore Hotham sailed from Sandy Hook for the same destination with a squadron of war-ships and 60 sail of transports, carrying 5,000 troops. These were under Major-General Grant, for the defence of the West Indian Islands, or the attack of the enemy's possessions there, should the conditions allow. The two fleets were for some time close together without either being aware of the other's presence, and both met the same gale of wind, which proved more damaging to the French than to the English, dispersing the former, but enabling the latter to arrive at Barbados in safety.

Rear-Admiral Barrington, who commanded on the Leeward Islands station, was in such weak force that far from being in a position to undertake offensive operations, he had been unable to prevent the fall of Dominique on the 7th of September to the arms of the Marquis de Bouillé.

But when Hotham joined him it was at once determined to make an attack on St. Lucia. Before such a determination was

* "Le Comte d'Estaing, *réduit à l'inaction par la supériorité de l'ennemie*, n'attendait qu'une occasion favorable pour se rendre dans les Antilles. Profitant de l'éloignement des Anglais, il fit route pour la Martinique."—*Chevalier*, p. 121.

come to, we may be sure that the strategical conditions were well considered by the two chiefs. As Hotham and d'Estaing had sailed from American ports on the same day, it seems certain that Hotham must have informed Barrington that d'Estaing was safely masked by the superior fleet of Byron. Interruption from the sea was, so far, not to be feared, and it might well have been supposed that even did d'Estaing manage to escape, Byron would have been so close upon his heels as to paralyze his motions.

The sequel presents one of the most remarkable stories in the whole range of territorial attacks from the sea, showing on the one hand the extreme hazard of such attacks unless the command of the sea is fully assured beforehand, and on the other, the possibilities of successful resistance even in the most desperate extremities.

Barrington's squadron, now consisting of 7 sail of the line, 2 frigates, and a sloop, conveying the army in its transports, arrived off the island on December 13th, and on the same day Brigadier-Generals Meadows and Prescot landed in different parts of the Grand Cul-de-sac with a considerable body of troops, while Brigadier-General Sir Henry Calder protected the landing-place to keep open a communication between the fleet and army. There was no opposition to the landing, and the troops marched at once on the fortress of Morne-fortuné, the chief land defence of the Baie du Carénage, which they took.

The gale of wind, from which the French had suffered most, might, however, have been most favourable to them, had skill or fortune allowed it. D'Estaing fell in with and captured three of Hotham's transports, from which he learnt the news of his sailing for the West Indies, and of his force, but not of his exact destination. He wrongly concluded it to be Antigua, and bore away for that island, off which he cruised for some days, and then, disappointed at seeing nothing, he made for Martinique, where he arrived on December 6th, a week prior to Barrington's arrival at St. Lucia. My authorities do not say whether Barrington had early notice of d'Estaing's arrival, but as soon as he became aware of his presence, he placed all his transports at the bottom of the Cul-de-sac and drew his ships up in line across the entrance, covering each flank by the erection of batteries and the mounting of guns.

The Baie du Carenage on the east coast of the island is entered from the west. The entrance is not more than 200 yards wide. Rocks surround the two points of this entrance, which is still rather narrowed by a shoal which extends from the south point

to the W.N.W. The depth of water varies from four to seven and a half fathoms in this passage. Inside the north point, at about 550 yards, is a second point, also surrounded by rocks; Morne-fortuné is in the direction of and at a small distance from this point. Its guns protect at once the road, its entrance, and the Cul-de sac, though this is screened from fire on the north side and at the bottom of the bay. . . .

On the 14th, in the morning, Vice-Admiral d'Estaing had intelligence of the attack directed against St. Lucia; he at once embarked 6,000 troops, and in the afternoon got under weigh with 11 sail of the line, a twelfth, the *Marseillais* joined him next morning.

On the 15th, in the morning, the squadron arrived off the Baie du Carénage.

The intention of the Commander-in-Chief was to get alongside (élonger) the English line from north to south; to anchor a ship abreast of each one of the enemy, and to authorize the captains to board their adversaries if they judged it prudent. In case of the depth of water being too great to anchor, he hoped to get positions inside the English line. The circumstances of wind, and the position of the enemy might, however, modify the plan of attack. The *Sagittaire* (50) and the frigate *Chimère* had orders, in any case, to attack the battery on the south point; the *Provence* (64) and the *Vaillant* (64) were charged to silence the guns on the north point. The wind was light from the eastward. The French squadron passed along the English line, engaging it and receiving the fire of the batteries on shore, but it did not anchor; it continued under sail, and in the evening renewed the attack of the morning. On the 17th d'Estaing anchored in the Creek du Choc, landed the troops and directed them upon Morne-fortuné, distant a few miles only from the anchorage. The squadron subsequently (on the 24th) got under sail again to renew the attack on the English division; but the lightness of the wind interfered with the projects of the Commander-in-Chief, and in the evening he returned to the anchorage. The expedition by land did not succeed. The troops were embarked on the 30th, and the squadron returned to Martinique. The governor of St. Lucia capitulated on the morning of its departure.*

This occurrence, so striking in its contrasts, requires some little examination before we can look at it with the view of drawing out its lessons. A century ago these would all have been obscured by the pæans to be sounded in praise of the English skill and courage. Now we should be foolish to take that line. We should rather reflect on the greatness and imminence of the risks that were run, and treasure them up in order that in the time to come we at least might know how to avoid them in like cases.

In the first place, the coincident sailing of Hotham and d'Estaing and their near neighbourhood *en route* to the West Indies, suggests that good fortune, and not skill, enabled Hotham to get to the West Indies at all. Then Lapeyrouse justly points out that when d'Estaing ascertained the truth from the captured members of Hotham's convoy, he had in his hands the greatest of opportunities had he chosen to use it.

On the evening of the capture of these three transports, the wind was E.S.E., Antigua bore S.W. In running to the southward for twenty-four hours he had a

* Troude, vol. ii., p. 17. *See also* Lapeyrouse, vol. iii., p. 53; Chevalier, p. 125; Schomberg, vol. i., p. 451. The illustration, from a contemporary print in the Royal United Service Institution, gives a capital idea of the position.

A French Tr… the Road leading to the Vigie. E Admiral Byron's Fleet
F C… artinico. T Traverses thrown across the Road leading to
Choc…

PART OF THE ISLAND
OF
Ste LUCIE
1 Mile
Anse du Choc
La Vigie
Le Carénage
Pointe Tarare
Admiral Barrington's post
GRAND CUL DE SAC
MARIGOT DE ROSEAU
French Fleet on the Morning of the 15th
French Fleet in the Afternoon of the 15th (the 3rd of the Line)
French Fleet in the Afternoon of the 15th (4 Sail of the Line)
Ste Lucie
Pointe du Champagny

A French Troops encamped after the attack on the Vigie. B Mortar Battery. C Seven-gun Battery. D Three-gun Battery to defend the Road leading to the Vigie. E Admiral Byron's Fleet F Count D'Estaing's Fleet. G Large Division of English Fleet cruising off Port Royal. H Ships cruising round the Island of Martinico. I Traverses thrown across the Road leading to Choc Bay where the French embarked.

PLAN DE LA RADE
DU FORT ROYAL
A. Fort Royal.
B. L'ance aux flamans.
C. pointe des negres.
D. Cap de Lay.
E. trou aux chats.
F. le grand Ilet.
G. le petit Ilet
H. les trois islots
I. Isle aux Ramiers
L. cul de sac au Lay
M. cul de sac Royal
Voy. de la Louis. pag. 48

chance of meeting the convoy, or he would have assured himself in missing it, that its destination was not Barbados. Then, being in the latitude of Antigua, he might have run before the wind for that island, and in the morning he would have picked up the convoy before their arrival. Another important consideration should have determined him. Barbados, by its position to windward, dominated the other islands; it was presumable that the enemy would profit by the favourable wind to proceed to an anchorage there, because from this point it could distribute its forces according to convenience.*

But then it seems strange that Barrington on his part should have made no attempt, by cruisers, to ascertain whether the coast was clear before he advanced upon St. Lucia. Fort Royal in Martinique was the known head-quarters of the French navy in the West Indies, and it was but 120 miles from Carlisle Bay in Barbados. It was not more than 60 miles from the south point of St. Lucia, and d'Estaing was at Fort Royal a full week before Barrington arrived off St. Lucia. But again d'Estaing lost his chance a second time by not dispatching cruisers towards Barbados to ascertain whether that had been, after all, Hotham's destination. Had he done so he might have caught Barrington half seas over, when his total destruction might have been easy. From the moment of leaving Sandy Hook, until the moment of landing at St. Lucia, the English force therefore had been running a series of imminent risks, which even the doctrine of chances left it imprudent to run.

Quite possibly Barrington's and Hotham's minds were dominated by chagrin at the loss of Dominique, and were full of the example which the French seemed to have set them in that success. But the capture of this island by the Marquis de Bouillé had been in the nature of a snap-shot. Its nearness to Martinique had always left it and St. Lucia peculiarly open to sudden *coups de main* by troops alone, and nothing but the blockade of Fort Royal by sea could prevent such attacks being made. De Bouillé had taken the island with 2,000 men, suddenly thrown into it, under the escort of no more than 3 frigates and a corvette. The expedition sailed after sunset on September 6th, the troops landed early next morning, and immediately occupied positions which commanded the capital of the island, and the governor capitulated the same day. Barrington, on learning what had happened, sailed to defend the island, but found the French flag flying everywhere.

He returned to Barbados [says Chevalier], awaiting with the keenest impatience the reinforcements from America, of which he had been informed. He proposed to attempt some operation, the success of which should diminish the effect which the loss of Dominique would produce in England. Ignorant that the Count d'Estaing had quitted

* Lapeyrouse, vol. iii., p 57.

Boston, he considered himself in command of the sea, and, in consequence, free to go wherever he thought proper. He cast his eyes on St. Lucia, the possession of which would be of peculiar value to the British navy.*

Where he was in error, then, was in not making more sure of his ground, by the use of cruisers to Fort Royal, before proceeding in his expedition. Where he was fortunate was in selecting so defensible a post as that in which he had moored his squadron. Had he been forced to anchor in an open position, he would at least have courted a terrible disaster.

Even as it was, we can only note that d'Estaing with a force so greatly superior could and ought to have destroyed Barrington, but he made no determined attack on him. The two cannonades were really distant affairs, without effect on either fleet. Chevalier tells us why, after the abortive attempt of the 24th, the attack was not renewed. D'Estaing, on the 28th, learnt that Admiral Byron was expected at Barbados, and that consequently his command of the sea was threatened. It must also be said, on the side of d'Estaing, that the attack of ships properly disposed under cover of batteries had always been considered extremely hazardous; and we have, in the course of these chapters, observed that in such cases it was generally considered necessary to get possession of the batteries in the first instance. D'Estaing did not reach the island until it was practically in the hands of the British, and the attacks he attempted were in the nature of those on an assured British possession. D'Estaing was shortly to prove his case by exhibiting himself in the position of Barrington, while forcing Byron to occupy that o the French Admiral, and to fail very much as he did.†

D'Estaing's information as to Byron had not been absolutely correct. He did not join Barrington until the 6th January 1779, and then it was at St. Lucia that the junction was formed. On the 11th, d'Estaing's frigates counted 15 British sail of the line at anchor at St. Lucia, which left him in a position of inferiority as to force. On the 19th he was joined by 4 sail of the line from France, under Count de Grasse, but Byron was about the same time joined by 4 sail of the line under Rowley. D'Estaing felt himself constrained to remain on the defensive, and presumably Byron did not consider himself strong enough to make any attack; and the weeks and months rolled on.

* P. 125.

† It is proper to observe that my criticisms on the English success and the French failure at St Lucia agree with those offered by Lapeyrouse and Chevalier. The latter quotes Suffren, who commanded one of d'Estaing's line-of-battle ships, to the same effect as to the sea attack.

On April 26th, Rear-Admiral de Vaudreuil joined d'Estaing with 2 sail of the line, and a third had arrived the evening before with a convoy. And then, on June 27th, the arrival of Rear-Admiral Lamotte-Piquet with 5 sail of the line, 3 frigates, and 60 transports loaded with troops, put d'Estaing in a position to operate on the offensive.

I have not yet succeeded in getting a clue to the methods sometimes pursued by our admirals in the West Indies when making St. Lucia their head-quarters and ostensibly watching Fort Royal, Martinique. I do not know of anything which should have prevented such a watch upon the port as would either have brought on a general action, or intercepted these constant reinforcements of the French. It seems difficult to believe that the principle of blockade, which had been so well understood and carried out in European waters by Hawke, should, though its application there was at this time impracticable, have been altogether forgotten, yet I have not so far been able to discover any other explanation. D'Estaing was allowed to pass from inferiority to superiority, with the result we are to note, without apparently any attempt to prevent the growth of his force in what we ought really to call now the usual way.

Early in June a considerable fleet of British merchantmen homeward bound was assembling at St. Christopher's to wait convoy. Byron, with, as far as I have ascertained, the alternative of blockade before him, chose to secure the safety of the convoy against d'Estaing, by himself accompanying it with his whole fleet. He proposed to make, with reference to d'Estaing, we may observe, a similar mistake to that which d'Estaing had made with reference to Lord Howe at Sandy Hook. Having the enemy in view, he should have kept him in view, being assured of the safety of the convoy as long as this was so. If d'Estaing was to be fought, it would be much better to fight him when unimpeded by the care of a convoy. If Byron, in his care of the convoy, were to quit West Indian waters, he left it open to d'Estaing to make any attack which the probable duration of his absence might warrant.

Byron sailed from St. Lucia for St. Christopher's, to the north, with his whole fleet on June 6th, and d'Estaing, being well informed of all the circumstances, began operations by despatching a small force to the south for the capture of St. Vincent. In doing this, d'Estaing was entirely within rule. The Caribbee inhabitants of St. Vincent were in revolt against the English garrison, which only numbered 300 men. The chiefs of the Caribbees had

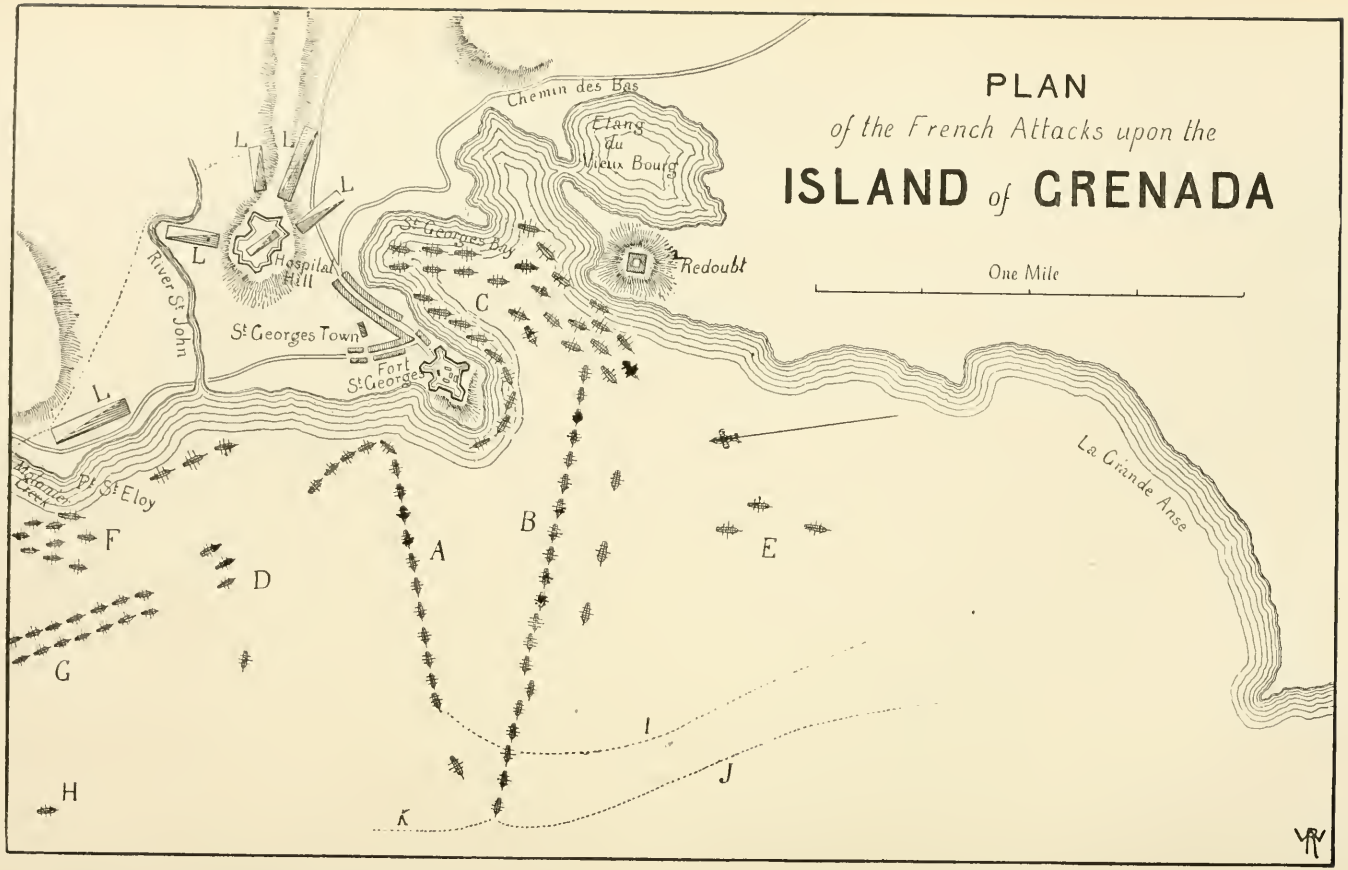
solicited the help of the French, and there was every reason to suppose that once landed, the French troops could possess themselves of the island and hold it, without need of maintaining communication over sea. So the naval part of the expedition consisted only of 3 corvettes and 2 schooners, carrying no more than 400 troops, and the whole under the command of Lieutenant de Vaisseau Frolong du Rumain. He sailed from Fort Royal on the 9th of June, arrived in sight of St. Vincent on the 17th, landed his troops, received the expected help of the Caribbees, and the surrender of the island next day.

This was a small matter, but one which could only have taken place in the absence of Byron, and for which his absence was therefore directly responsible. But d'Estaing had larger business before him when the ships and troops already spoken of reached him on the 27th of June. He took the troops on board his fleet, now consisting of 25 sail of the line, and on June 31st made sail for Barbados. He must have been well aware of the risks he was running. He probably knew that Byron had under his command now 22 sail of the line, though they might not be all with his flag. Byron had already been more than three weeks absent to the northward, and it was not easy to say how soon he might reappear. The French ships, crowded with troops, would have been much hampered in a general action. If they were in sufficient force to conquer the island, the main point was to get them on shore at once, and to be ready to meet Byron at sea in superior strength should he attempt to interfere.

The direction of the wind was such that d'Estaing found he could not fetch Barbados. The pressure of the above consideration was upon his mind, and he stood for Grenada. On the 2nd July he anchored near Beauséjour Point, a little distance from George Town, the capital of the island.

On a height which commanded the town, the English had established an entrenched camp, armed with heavy guns. This position, known under the name of Hospital Hill, was occupied by a detachment of regular troops and militia—about 800 men. The Governor of Grenada, Lord Macartney, supposed it impregnable, and he had placed there everything that was most valuable in the colony. He himself occupied a fort between Hospital Hill and George Town. Count d'Estaing, expecting the arrival of Admiral Byron, wished to recover his liberty of action as soon as possible. He determined to make himself master of the entrenched camp by a *coup de main*, as he considered it the key of the position.* Immediately after sunset, the expeditionary corps, divided into three columns, commanded by Colonels Arthur and Edward Dillon and de Noailles, were put in motion. In order to divert the enemy's attention, a demonstra-

* It must be borne in mind that d'Estaing was commander-in-chief by land as well as by sea.



A Admiral Byron attacking the French Fleet the 6th of July. B French Fleet. C French Fleet cannonading the Fort. D Ships left to protect the Transports. E Disabled French Ships. F French Transports the 2nd of July. G English Transports. H French Frigate, the 5th at night, who gave the alarm of Admiral Byron's approach to the French Fleet. I English Fleet tack to save the disabled ships left behind. J French tack to the southward. K Manœuvre of the French to cut off our Transports from the Fleet. L French troops attacking Hospital Hill.

tion was made in the evening against an English post facing the sea, in which some of the ships of the squadron took part. Towards eleven o'clock, our troops silently climbed the steep slopes which led to the summit of the hill. Although the English had accumulated obstacles, such as pallisades and stone walls, nothing was able to check the ardour of our troops. D'Estaing, sword in hand, was amongst the first to leap over the enemy's entrenchments. After a sharp but short struggle, the English laid down their arms. On the 4th, at break of day, Count d'Estaing fired a few shot into the fort where the Governor was placed. Lord Macartney, knowing that all resistance had become vain, sent an officer to treat of capitulation. The proposals which he made to Count d'Estaing being rejected, he surrendered at discretion. One hundred and two guns, sixteen mortars, three flags, provisions, stores, thirty merchant ships, fell into our hands. On the 5th July, the troops which were not required to occupy the town and the forts were re-embarked.*

Byron returned to St. Christopher's on July 1st, and immediately heard the news of the fall of St. Vincent. He at once decided to make an attempt for its recovery, and sailed with 21 or 22 sail of the line, and 28 transports carrying troops for landing, when he learnt, from a cruiser which had been in search of him, that Grenada was attacked. He pushed on for that island, with the hope of defending it if there was yet time.

D'Estaing had heard, on the night of the 5th of July, that Byron was approaching, and had given orders to weigh at four o'clock next morning. At break of day the two fleets saw each other. Byron saw the French standing out to sea from St. George's Bay, their force not being then ascertained, but believed to be not greater than his own. Supposing that the French Admiral was anxious to avoid an engagement, he made signal for a general chase, and then, more aware of what was before him, a signal for close action. In the result, and owing in part to the fact of several of d'Estaing's ships which had been under weigh all night finding themselves to leeward, and also to the fact of Byron's discovering that Grenada was gone, the action was only partial. Byron lay-to for the night, and d'Estaing went back to his conquered anchorage in St. George's Bay. Byron had lost Grenada and was in no condition to recover it. He took his damaged fleet back to St. Christopher's.†

Except that d'Estaing acted with his eyes open to the risk, and was superior in the attack on Grenada, while Barrington acted with his eyes shut, and was inferior in force at St. Lucia, the cases lie nearly on all fours. In the detail that Barrington after possessing himself of the commanding works, chose to meet the enemy at anchor, while d'Estaing chose to meet him under weigh,

* Chevalier, p. 135.

† Schomberg, vol. i., p. 470; Troude (whose account is a bad one), vol. ii., p. 62; Lapeyrouse, vol. iii., p. 88; Chevalier, p. 123.

there is a difference, but the results and the main points were identical. The game on Barrington's part was a risky and a daring one, but there was no other, with his inferior force, for him to play. D'Estaing was playing the wrong game. It was clear that he might have kept himself superior to Byron, and his proper play was to beat him at sea. As it chanced, his bad play succeeded, but if Hospital Hill had been able to defend itself only for a day or two, the French might have lost their whole army. Byron and the forts of Grenada together were more than a match for d'Estaing, and the latter could never have embarked his troops had the anchorage in St. George's Bay been available for Byron. But as it was, Grenada was an enemy's country when Byron sighted it, just as St. Lucia had been an enemy's country when d'Estaing sighted it, and nothing could be done in presence of existing forces.

The extracts which Chevalier gives from Suffren's letters, written at the time, are of the fullest value when we remember that Suffren's strategy in the East Indies was the greatest condemnation of d'Estaing's in the West. Suffren seems to have been clear that gallant as d'Estaing undoubtedly was, he was less a seaman than a soldier, and did not at all understand the elementary principles of naval war.

As a contrast to this defective strategy in making territorial attacks, it may be useful to pass at once to an example of more perfect strategy which was carried out by de Grasse in 1781 against Rodney.

In December 1780, the latter officer had arrived at St. Lucia from New York, and there being no sufficient naval force to oppose him, he arranged and carried out several territorial attacks. The arrival of Sir Samuel Hood from England raised his strength to 21 sail of the line, and the intelligence that war had been declared against Holland, gave him the opportunity of making conquest of the important island of St. Eustatia and its dependencies before the Dutch authorities had recovered from their astonishment at being summoned to surrender. But when he proceeded on this service with his main strength, he took care to mask the five French sail of the line and frigates, which were at anchor in the bay of Fort Royal, at Martinique.

Rodney and General Vaughan now proposed to follow up this blow by an attack on Surinam and Curaçao, but on 11th of February, news came that a French squadron of 8 or 10 sail of the line and frigates had been seen steering for the West Indies. Rear-

Admiral Drake was then with 6 sail of the line carrying out the blockade of Fort Royal, already mentioned. Rodney, in view of the strategical conditions that Drake in weak force would be between two fires, but in strong force might be able to strike a blow at the approaching enemy, sent Sir Samuel Hood to take command of the blockade of Fort Royal with additional line-of-battle force. Having soon reason to believe that the approaching force was greater than had been represented, he sent further reinforcements to Sir Samuel Hood which raised his fleet to 18 sail of the line, while Rodney remained at St. Eustatia with the remaining 3 or 4.

Rodney, however, was misinformed as to the strength of the approaching fleet. It was 21 sail of the line under Count de Grasse, convoying a merchant fleet of 200 sail, and carrying 6,000 land troops with a formidable artillery. The two fleets came into contact close to Fort Royal on the 29th of April, and the 5 French sail of the line in Fort Royal were able to get out and take part in the ensuing action. De Grasse, with such great superiority ought to have crushed Sir Samuel Hood; but, as it turned out, there was a partial action only, in which the French were the greatest losers in men, though many ships of Hood's fleet were badly damaged, and Hood was forced to proceed to St. Christopher's to join Rodney and to refit. The junction took place after the 9th of May, and the whole fleet proceeded to refit and supply at Antigua.

The command of the sea had thus passed entirely out of the hands of Rodney, and if de Grasse had been unbiassed in his views of the consequences, it is plain that he should have followed up Hood to the northward, and made immediate use of his superiority in a determined attempt to crush Rodney altogether. But French commanders seldom understood, or at any rate acted on, the plain principles of strategy. Even when numerically superior, their strategy was that of the inferior force, which tried to gain advantages by means chiefly of evasion.

Rodney concluded that this would be the immediate action of de Grasse, and he felt all the inconvenience of being to leeward with a partially disabled fleet. He assumed that St. Lucia would be attacked, and sent letters to its Governor and to the senior officer of the ships there, that he was making all haste to come to their relief.

Rodney's surmise was correct. The military expedition, consisting of some 1,200 men under the Marquis de Bouillé, sailed from

Fort Royal on the 9th of May, the same day that Hood had rejoined Rodney, and at once landed at several points at St. Lucia. On the 12th de Grasse supported, by appearing in Grosse Ilet Bay. But in the end the troops were embarked and the enterprise abandoned, and three separate reasons have been assigned for a circumstance that certainly wants explanation. It is said, first, that de Bouillé found the place too strong for him; secondly, that he found he could not secure himself in his conquest if he made it, for several weeks; and thirdly, that the whole attack was a mere feint to divert Rodney's attention from the real point which was to be struck at.

There may be some reason in this last assigned cause, as well as in the two first; for on the same day that de Bouillé sailed for St. Lucia, a force of 1,300 troops, under convoy of 2 line-of-battle ships and some frigates, was despatched direct to Tobago in order to effect its capture before any relief to it could come over sea.

If the chart of the West Indies be referred to, it will be seen that with Rodney at Antigua, de Grasse at Martinique, still numerically superior, and Tobago 200 miles, if not dead to windward, at least slow of approach from the northward, it becomes plain that the blow was well aimed. And then, too, it may be seen that the attack was in a sense covered by de Grasse's position, for he might reasonably expect to know when Rodney should proceed to the southward. After the withdrawal of de Bouillé from St. Lucia the troops re-embarked were sent after the first instalment, and de Bouillé either then went with them, or followed, while further troops for the attack, said in some of the accounts to reach 3,000 men, were pushed on.

Rodney had news of the attack on St. Lucia immediately after his quitting Antigua, but not, it is said, of its abandonment. That news reached him when he was near Barbados, and it follows that he either believed in the capacity of St. Lucia to repel attack, as it is said,* or else he abandoned it to its fate in his fear of what might happen to Barbados. He had no idea whatever that Tobago would be attacked. But it may be that want of water, and the necessity of landing his sick, as is also alleged, determined him to make for Barbados on his way to St. Lucia, Barbados not being so much out of the way as it appears on the chart, because of the prevailing winds. He made detachments of a line-of-battle ship, a frigate, and several small vessels, to St. Lucia, fearing another attack on it, and thus weakened his own force.

* Beatson, vol. v., p. 19 .

It was on the 23rd of May that Rodney anchored in Carlisle Bay, Barbados, and it was on the 27th that he first heard of the attack on Tobago, and the naval force mentioned was only that which convoyed the first detachment of troops. Rodney detached Drake on the 29th with six sail of the line and a land force, to succour Tobago, but had no sooner done so than he heard that de Grasse's whole fleet had been steering a course for that island. Very soon afterwards letters from Drake informed him that 20 sail of the line of the enemy were already at Tobago when he arrived there. This intelligence reached Rodney on June 2nd, and he put to sea with all his force on the 3rd, and was joined by Drake the same day. But de Grasse had already reaped the reward of his strategy. Rodney learnt on the 4th that Tobago had capitulated, and on the 5th his look-outs observed the French, fleet consisting of 24 sail of the line and 5 frigates, steering towards Grenada. Rodney had with him but 20 sail of the line, and did not care to risk an action except under more favourable geographical conditions than existed at the time. Tobago no longer flew the English flag, and the operation was over.

It must again be observed that though de Grasse's strategy on this occasion was good, and so far deserved success, it was not perfect. It was, as I have said, the strategy of the inferior force, and he ran the risk of having his detached force cut off before he could succour it. Not, indeed, that detaching a force was wrong in itself; it was the proper policy of the inferior naval power, where the risk was worth running for the sake of the reward. The danger was in not keeping closer touch between his own and Rodney's fleet; had he done so, his detached force would have run but little risk. Rodney, as we have seen, anchored in Carlisle Bay on May 23rd. De Grasse did not sail from Martinique till the 25th, the French troops only landed at Tobago on the 24th, and de Grasse only reached the island on the 31st, according to de Lapeyrouse, while, according to Beatson, Drake saw them on the 30th. Nautical and civil time may possibly account for the discrepancy, but it is certain that the time element, of which I have so often spoken, was not calculated with sufficient care, and that it was good and ill fortune, more than absolutely sound strategy, which gave Tobago to the French without a hitch, in 1781.

But I think the finest piece of strategy against territory, as it may be practised by the naval commander who is not in assured command of the sea, was that exhibited by Suffren in the East

Indies in 1782. This officer had found himself, by actual experiment, evenly matched by Sir Edward Hughes. He had had three pitched battles with him, one on February 16th, another on April 11th, and a third on July 6th, when each fleet had been of the same numerical strength, 11 sail of the line, but the French loss in killed and wounded had been more than double that of the English. At Cuddalore, after the last of these battles, Suffren heard of the approach of 2 sail of the line and other ships of war, as well as transports. He proceeded to meet them at Batacaloa, a port about sixty miles to the southward of Trincomalee, having taken on board 600 or 700 troops. Then for the time he was lost to the sight of Hughes, who remained refitting at Madras. On the 21st of August he was joined by the 2 sail of the line with transports and store-ships carrying 600 infantry, and he at once conceived his plan.

In the south-west monsoon which then blew, it would, as Suffren knew, take a fleet about a fortnight to beat up from Madras to Trincomalee, while half a day was sufficient to run down from Batacaloa to the same place. If, therefore, Hughes got notice of the sailing of Suffren on the day that he sailed from Batacaloa, the French commander would have a fortnight for his operations against Trincomalee. This was one security drawn from the time element. But he now made up 15 sail of the line, while Hughes only made up 12. The risk was not excessive, even if Hughes should appear before Trincomalee surrendered, as the fleet itself was not necessary to support the attack, though some of its men and guns were. The passage was so exceedingly short between Batacaloa and Trincomalee, that there was no fear of being caught when hampered with troops and transport. Four or five days might have been taken as a reasonable time within which to effect the reduction of Trincomalee, and therefore in any case, Suffren was allowing a good margin. But he took the precaution to ascertain from the report of a cruiser which had watched off Trincomalee for the purpose, that the coast was clear before he sailed for his destination on the 24th of August. The fleet passed straight into the harbour on the succeeding day, and anchored within the forts and out of their fire. Broadsides had been exchanged on passing them, but with little effect. On the night of the 26th 2,600 men were landed, and on the 27th and 28th, batteries were erected and armed with guns from the ships. Fire was opened on the forts on the 29th, and on the 30th the Governor of Trincomalee offered terms of capitulation, to which Suffren, not

at all easy in his mind as to the possibilities should Hughes appear before the surrender was complete, lent a ready ear. The French flag was hoisted on the works on the 31st, and Trincomalee had become a French possession.

A less wise strategist than Suffren might easily have prolonged the siege for the exaction of severer terms; but Suffren knew that after all the precautions possible to be taken, there were yet adverse chances in war.

It had happened that on the 12th of August one of Hughes's frigates, the *Coventry*, had chased the French frigate *Bellona* into Batacaloa; to her astonishment she saw Suffren's squadron, with his transports, lying at anchor. Without a moment's delay she sped away before the south-west monsoon to warn Sir Edward Hughes at Madras of the danger. Hughes put to sea on August 20th, that is, four days before Suffren was ready to quit Batacaloa, and he arrived off Trincomalee during the night of September 2nd. At daylight in the morning he saw that his errand was bootless: that Suffren had outwitted him, and that the French flag had superseded the English on shore.

Suffren had only just escaped a danger, although with his numerically superior fleet it could never have been a very serious one. But a miss was as good as a mile to the French commander who, with Trincomalee secure behind him, was able to come out and fight his fourth pitched battle with his enemy. The result was, as usual, indecisive; Hughes returned to Madras, and Suffren to the shelter of his new port, Trincomalee.

Such was this famous exploit, which, with the rest of his conduct in the East Indies, has placed Suffren in the highest rank of naval commanders. We must not forget, however, that the strategy employed was only justified in the absence of force enough to carry out the masking of Hughes and the attack on Trincomalee at the same time. Perfect strategy would have required that this should have been done, and as I have now brought these normal examples nearly to a conclusion, I may usefully subjoin an illustration where the method adopted was absolutely faultless.

The case is the capture of Belleisle in 1761 by Keppel and General Hodson. Keppel sailed from St. Helens with 10 sail of the line, to be joined afterwards by 7 more. With him were a considerable body of frigates and sloops, and 100 sail of transports carrying 10,000 land forces. At the same time, Captain Buckle sailed for Brest with 12 sail of the line and 3 frigates. Brest was

the only port whence any naval force capable of interfering with Keppel could issue; so that not only was he prepared by the great fleet of 17 sail that he took to Belleisle, to meet any hostile fleet likely to make an appearance, but his operations were doubly secured inasmuch as all the existing French power was masked at Brest by Buckle.

The French garrison at Belleisle was 2,600 men, so that the forces landed from Keppel's fleet were ample for the subjugation of the island; and there being no chance of interference from the sea, its surrender in time was certain. On the 8th of April the first detachment was landed clear of all batteries at Port Andeo Bay, but it was repulsed after landing, by a body of the enemy who had entrenched themselves on a hill. A second landing in greater force was effected on the 22nd, near Fort D'Arsie, after its guns had been silenced by some of the ships of war, and the footing on shore was made good. M. de St. Croix, the governor, then retired into his citadel, the town of Palais, which he defended until the 7th of June, when, a practicable breach having been made, he capitulated, and Belleisle became British territory.

There is absolutely nothing to remark on this operation, except that the method pursued was as certain to produce success as any other which could be conceived. All experience had dictated what should be done, and being done, the result became a certainty.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Conditions under which Attacks on Territory from the Sea succeed or fail—(*concluded*).

The expedition of Napoleon to Egypt as an instance of incorrect strategy.—The invasion of the Crimea in a sense analogous.—The capture of Bomarsund conducted in full accord with all the rules of naval warfare.—Long series of bombardments commencing with Algiers.—Syrian coast towns and Acre.—Odessa.—Employment of steam and sail on precisely the same duty and in the same way.—Sweaborg, a continuation of the old methods.—Bombardments by the Chilians of Peruvian coast towns.—The Angamos.—Long-range bombardments less novel than they seem; chief change from mortar to gun.—Sfax; range of bombardment still extended.—Alexandria; ranges governed by geographical conditions.—Former lessons not disturbed.—Charleston, and the four attacks upon it; two against rule and unsuccessful, two in accordance with rule and successful.—Other attacks on territory by the Federals.—The French fleet in the Baltic in 1870; remarkable prevalence of law.—Nothing to show that the old rules of war have changed.

Those who have described the incidents which together make up the story of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, have seldom withdrawn themselves far enough from the details of the narrative to observe that, from beginning to end, the results were governed by law. That law, preceding chapters have given us pretty ample means to comprehend, and if we rightly exercise our faculties we shall have no difficulty in pronouncing that Napoleon wrongly set about his work. How far the whole scheme was visionary, and whether, supposing all had succeeded to his wish in Egypt, it would really have been possible to strike at India from that position, we need not argue. Our point is that Napoleon in his conduct of the expedition was false to rule, and deserved even worse than the loss of a fleet and an army which attended his misconception.

No doubt the conditions under which the expedition was prepared were tempting. In December 1796 Sir John Jervis had been

forced out of the Mediterranean by the junction of the French and Spanish fleets, making up 38 sail of the line against Sir John's 15, and no attempt had been made to re-enter it. In February 1797 the Spanish fleet, sailing from Cartagena to Cadiz, had been 27 sail of the line strong; 25 of these felt the weight of Jervis's arm on the celebrated Valentine's day, but his fleet was still only 15 sail of the line, reinforcements from England having been discounted by an equal number of casualties. But the battle of St. Vincent left the Spanish fleet at Cadiz still 28 sail of the line in May, watched by St. Vincent with only 21.

The French fleet of 12 sail of the line remained intact at Toulon, and there were from 12 to 15 sail of the line at Brest.

The Dutch fleet which had encountered Duncan at Camperdown in October 1797 had been 15 sail of the line, was thus reduced to 6 only.

The opening of the year 1798 therefore found some 60 sail of the line of the old stock, disposed in four of the enemy's ports, while general belief in France magnified the possible additions. England was troubled with alarms of invasion either of Ireland, Scotland, or the south coast of England. It was probably this fear which dictated the retention of such a large proportion of the ships at home, and continued the policy of abandoning the Mediterranean to the French at Toulon. The Channel fleet in the early part of the year 1798 was nominally 47 sail of the line, but some 18 of them do not appear to have acted at all in home waters unless they were held in reserve at anchor. In April there were only 17 ships of the nominal Channel fleet at sea, 6 under Sir R. Curtis off the coast of Ireland, and 10 under Lord Bridport at Brest, while one was on detached service with Warren off the French coast. At the same time, St. Vincent only had about 23 sail with him to watch Cadiz.

In the North Sea there was a British fleet of nominally 19 sail; while the needs of a maritime empire absorbed some 10 sail of the line in convoy duties, 16 in the West Indies and 11 at the Cape of Good Hope and in the East Indies. Nominally, we had 118 sail of the line (including 50-gun ships) in commission in the early part of 1798, but it does not seem that anything like that number were available at a given moment.

Under such conditions as these, there was really little to lead the French Government to anticipate interference with their proceedings in the Mediterranean, and there was a certain foundation for Napoleon's belief that fear of attack in India would make it

necessary for England to detach additional line-of-battle force thither, thus making Mediterranean operations still more secure from interference by sea.

The assemblage of the force at Toulon was known to the English Government, yet the pressure on her naval resources was so great that it was not till the 30th of April 1798 that Nelson, with 3 sail of the line, 2 frigates, and a sloop, could be detached into the Mediterranean. As there were now 13 sail of the line at Toulon, the dispatch of Nelson's force was really offering it as a sacrifice. But, as is well known, Nelson was prevented from reconnoitring Toulon by a gale which met him and dismasted his flag-ship on May 22nd, three days before the French expedition, consisting of 13 sail of the line and 59 other war-ships, with 400 transports carrying 36,000 men, sailed from Toulon and Genoa for Egypt.

Nelson was not able to reach his rendezvous off Toulon till the 31st May, and by that time had learnt that the French fleet was at sea. Had the English Government not detached 8 sail of the line to reinforce St. Vincent, it is evident that Nelson must simply have returned to Cadiz. But his hopes of a reinforcement kept him at the Toulon rendezvous, and he was joined there, on June 7th, by 11 sail of the line under Troubridge, making his fleet up to 14, or rather superior in number to the French. He was then able to proceed in search of them.

It is not necessary to tell again here the well-known story of the pursuit, and the Battle of the Nile. It is only desirable to mention the one point which has not been as much noticed as it deserves, namely, that Nelson, on June 22nd, at daylight, actually saw off Cape Passaro two French frigates, part of Napoleon's force; and that a line-of-battle ship was also seen by some of the ships. The ships seen were chased by the *Leander*, and if Nelson had not at the moment received information from a merchant ship which led him to recall the *Leander*, there can be no doubt that he would have met and destroyed the whole expedition at sea.*

The ultimate result of this great invasion is well known. The fleet accompanying it was destroyed on the 1st August, and the army, after holding Egypt, but being so cut off from France that efforts were vain to supply and reinforce it, finally surrendered in 1801. It has sometimes been argued that the results of the Egyptian expedition were worth the sacrifice, but such a view is not generally held, and it seems difficult to believe that it was anything but a gigantic failure.

* *Nelson Dispatches*, vol. iii., p. 43.

Had the prospects been much better than they were, the conduct of the expedition was contrary to the plain rules of naval war. Before it started, steps should have been taken to prevent interference by sea, by masking or employing St. Vincent's fleet. If he was left in a position to detach a force equal to the French, the risks were altogether too great to have justified the despatch of the expedition. There was really no object in taking the line-of-battle ships to Egypt, and the exceedingly narrow chance by which a battle at sea was missed on 22nd of June exhibits the danger in a striking light. Had the French line-of-battle ships remained at Toulon, it seems unlikely that Napoleon's expedition could have been interfered with at all, for Nelson could not have turned his back on them in view of the dangers of their junction with the Spanish fleet at Cadiz. But had Brueys in the first instance pushed for this junction, it remains possible that no attempt would have been made by England to recover the command of the Mediterranean, owing to the large force which it would have been necessary to place off Cadiz. The loss of the French fleet at the battle of the Nile was primarily due to false strategy; and if the French were not strong enough to mask the English fleet, they were courting defeat by employing invasion.

Thus the expedition to Egypt was "an adventure," carried out, not in the cool deliberation which wins and holds success, but in a burst of Republican enthusiasm which would not stop to calculate chances. It failed, either because it was not properly conducted, or because it ought never to have been undertaken.

There is a slight analogy between the French expedition to Egypt and the Anglo-French expedition to the Crimea. Kinglake has stigmatized it as "an adventure" also, and there is no doubt that in disobedience to the strict rules of naval war, risks were run which were entirely unnecessary.* The chief breach of rule was the omission to mask the Russian ships at Sevastopol by a sufficient force, and thereby leaving the crowded transports open to devastation by a determined onset. There is no doubt but that the risk was known and felt at the time; but a general absence of understanding that there always had been, and always would be, rule in these matters, placed the whole of the naval defending force with the transports, rather than in watch upon the only force of the enemy which could interfere with them.† The justification for breach of rule, was the great disproportion which existed

* *The Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. ii., p. 145.

† A watch was, however, kept upon Sevastopol by a frigate.

between the defending British fleet with the transports, and the possible attacking force at Sevastopol; and rule was yielded to so far as to keep this British fleet entirely clear of troops and ready for action.*

Then, in the invasion itself, risks were run which were not necessary, and which even more justified the stigma of "an adventure." We have seen throughout these chapters that, assuming a command of the sea, suitable ports can always be captured and held on an enemy's coast, and that from them any sort of military expeditions can penetrate inland, resting on the absolutely secure base which the sea, being commanded, gives them. The safe course, the course according to rule, when it was determined to invade the Crimea, was to secure a port in the first instance—Kazatch or Balaklava—and then to operate inland from that base. This, which was afterwards found to be the necessity, should have been, according to experience, the preliminary. In omitting it, the most desperate and wholly unnecessary risks were run.

Probably there never was an operation so splendidly conducted as the disembarkation of the British troops on the beach at Old Fort on the 14th of September 1854, yet these were the conditions—

At 7 A.M., when the operations commenced, the water was smooth as glass; no enemy appeared to oppose the landing. As the ships were taking up position, only one Russian officer, with his mounted orderly, appeared on the beach, and remained beside his horse for a considerable time, apparently occupied with his note-book, as though he were dotting down our proceedings, certainly neither contemplating a descent upon his shores nor a departure from the rules of chivalry in the receipt of a warning shot. Suddenly our design seemed to burst upon his mind, and he beat a very hasty retreat, narrowly escaping capture, for the landing of the French troops further to the eastward had not been noticed.

By 6 P.M., 30,000 infantry and 24 guns, or 4 complete batteries, were landed; but sunset came upon us with a louring sky and a threatening swell breaking on the beach, a sure indication of approaching wind, rendering the disembarkation of artillery more and more tedious and difficult. At nightfall the weather was so bad, and sea heavy,

* "It was upon the English fleet, therefore, that the duty of protecting the whole armada devolved; and supposing that the enemy were aware of the helpless state of the French and Turkish vessels laden with troops, and of the enormous convoy of transports which had to be protected, he might be expected to judge that it was incumbent upon him to come out of the harbour and assail the vast flotilla of transports; for under the guns of Sevastopol the Russians had 15 sailing ships of the line, with some frigates and brigs, and also 12 war steamers, though of these the *Vladimir* was the only powerful vessel. To encounter this force, and to defend from its enterprises the rest of the armada, the English had 10 sail of the line (including 2 screw-steamers), 2 50-gun frigates, and 13 steamers of war heavily armed. . . . None of our ships of war carried troops on board; they were, therefore, ready for action."—Kinglake, vol. ii., p. 145.

that the difficult operation had to be suspended. The troops had landed with three days' provisions in their haversacks, but without tents or camp equipage of any kind. Thus was that gallant army exposed for two days and nights on a hostile shore, with no water except what fell from the heavens, not half its artillery, no shelter, and in the vicinity of a powerful enemy.*

It is terrible to think what the result might have been had the whole Russian force, close to at the Alma, marched upon the British by night when the cover of the ships' fire could not have been available. Looking back, it is plain what the risk was, and how unnecessary it was; it seems hardly possible that had the then authorities possessed any clear knowledge of the principles of naval warfare, a British army would ever have been placed in such jeopardy.

A month before this "adventure," all the principles which had for a century and a half governed the successful attacks upon territory were put in force in connection with the capture of Bomarsund, the Russian citadel of the Aland Islands in the Baltic.

We have first the Anglo-French fleets in command of the Baltic Sea, and controlling therefore the waters which surrounded Bomarsund. The forts were four in number. The chief, facing a narrow channel between the islands, was a stone fort, semicircular in shape, mounting upwards of 80 guns in two tiers, on the sea-faces, and said to be equally strong on the land face. A thousand yards north of the main fort, and the same distance west of it, were circular forts, each capable of mounting 36 to 40 guns, but of course incapable of concentrating any large proportion of them on one spot. There was another circular fort across the channel, and 1,000 yards distant from the main fort, and, lastly, a 5-gun battery 1,700 yards S.S.W. of the main fort, which guarded the approach by sea from the southward. Although it is stated that the main fort was equally strong on the land and sea sides, it seems clear that the older principles of fortification were here departed from, and that there was no main citadel, stored and arranged so that a garrison might hold out for a considerable time, however attacked. The design of the works seemed somewhat Chinese in character, and contemplated attack upon the sea face only.

From the moment that the Allies determined to attack Bomarsund, it was decided that the navy was to play its old secondary part, and that 10,000 troops were to be employed against a garrison of about one-third of this strength.

* Captain (now Admiral Sir William) Mends, in *Journal R.U.S.I.*, vol. vi., p. 397.

BOMBARDMENT OF BOMARSUND.

BRETTELL, 51, RUPERT ST LONDON, W

The next point of arrangement was the assumed command of the sea, and the anxiety on this head is not a little remarkable, seeing the overwhelming superiority which steam had given to the Allies.*

Thus Sir Charles Napier writes to Sir James Graham, on July 10th, 1854, *apropos* of the intended attack—

I shall take care to be on my guard against the Russians from Cronstadt. If they come down, so much the better.†

The naval force told off to support the attack on Bomarsund was but 4 steam line-of-battle ships, with a few steam frigates and smaller vessels; while Commodore Martin watched the Russian fleet with 9 sail of the line, mostly steam; and the bulk of the allied fleet was concentrated at Ledsund to support Commodore Martin in the exceedingly remote possibility that an inferior fleet of sailing line-of-battle ships would dare to face, at sea, a superior fleet chiefly moved by steam. Yet the contingency was always present, and provided against. Sir James Graham wrote to Sir Charles Napier that:

His block ships, screw frigates, some of his steamers, and a portion of the French squadron would be strong enough in invest Bomarsund, as there was no naval force except gun-boats opposed to him; and that after detaching these, he and the French admiral would have 20 sail of the line at the neck of the Gulf of Finland to keep the Russian fleet sealed up.‡

As for preventing the junction of the Cronstadt and Sweaborg fleets, if they wished it, this, said the Admiral to the First Lord, was utterly impossible, without remaining off there with the whole fleet, and leaving the French admiral and general to themselves at Bomarsund, which Sir James could never have contemplated. Commodore Martin had 2 steam frigates and three paddle steamers in advance of him, and he would give timely notice should the Russians break ground. This, continued the Admiral, is the best disposition I could make, and I hope all will go right.§

Napier thought the number of troops to be sent was excessive; he thought 5,000 quite sufficient, as it was not intended to hold Bomarsund through the winter. He wrote again:—

The Gulf of Finland was well guarded by Commodore Martin, and he (the Admiral) had taken steps to act, should the Russian fleet attempt to disturb the operations going on.‖

The reason why the large ships were not brought up to the fortress was the evident one that they might be wanted to meet the Russian fleet, should an attempt be made by the enemy to raise the siege. . . .

* The English fleet alone consisted of 18 sail of the line, of which 12 were steam; 5 steam frigates, 14 steam corvettes, and 4 steam sloops. The Russians had not a single steam line-of-battleship and very few—about 9—steamers of any kind.

† *History of the Baltic Campaign of 1854*, edited by G. Butler Earp, p. 289.

‡ Earp, p. 318.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

The French admiral thought of taking the greater part of his large ships to Bomarsund, to keep the troops and ships together.

This arrangement rendered it imperative on Sir Charles to keep his large ships in readiness for any attempt on the part of the Russians. He had been strictly enjoined by Sir James Graham not to leave the Gulf at all, and when Sir James found that the bulk of the fleet was at Ledsund, he expressed his fears lest the Russians might succeed in getting out.*

On the 5th (August) the Admiral expressed his fears to Admiral Parseval (Deschenes, the French Admiral) that the force at Ledsund was being reduced too low, should the Russian fleet attempt to disturb that of the Allies.†

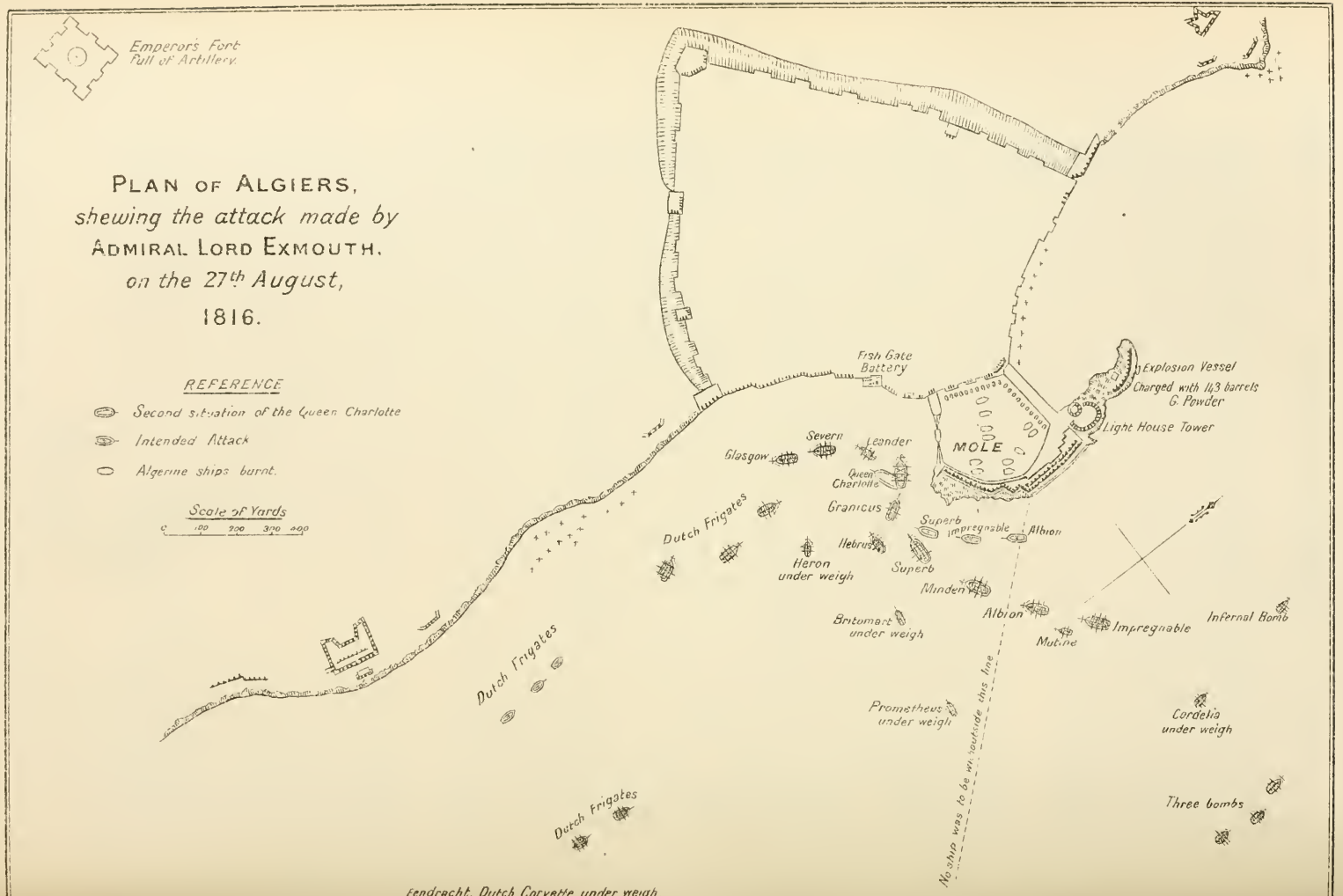
These various extracts from a book written in defence and under the inspiration of Sir Charles Napier, are a very ample proof that steam had in no way touched the great principles which govern territorial attacks. We shall see, before we close this chapter, that according to the very latest experience they remain intact.

There is no need to describe the attack on Bomarsund. We have had the picture of it over and over again in the successes described in the preceding chapters. It happened that the most convenient landing-place for the French was covered by some of the guns of the 5-gun battery, and these were accordingly silenced by an overpowering bombardment from the ships. The English landing was clear of all opposition. Batteries were then erected to play upon the forts. Fire was opened first on the west circular fort on the 13th August, and it surrendered on the 14th to the French battery at 600 yards. The English battery opened on the north circular fort on the 15th at 950 yards, and by the afternoon it was untenable and surrendered. The main fort had been well shelled by the ships on the 15th, and was about to be proceeded against by the shore batteries on the 16th, when it sent out a flag of truce and surrendered, followed soon after by the last circular fort across the water.

A long series of operations of a particular class—bombardments—is ushered in by that of Algiers. I shall touch upon it, and then make a few observations on the similar attacks which were carried out on Acre, Odessa, Sweaborg, Sfax, the coast towns in Peru, and Alexandria. Of these operations, all, it must be remembered, were carried out by naval Powers in command of the sea, thus continuing the old rule; while only Acre and Sfax are cases where bombardment was other than a destructive and punitive operation. It is again worthy of observation that the bombardment of Algiers, Acre, and other Syrian coast towns, Sfax and

* Earp, p. 332.

† *Ibid.*, p. 359.


Emperors Fort
Full of Artillery
PLAN OF ALGIERS,
shewing the attack made by
ADMIRAL LORD EXMOUTH,
on the 27th August,
1816.
REFERENCE
Second situation of the Queen Charlotte
Intended Attack
Algerine ships burnt.
Scale of Yards
0 100 200 300 400
Fish Gate Battery
Explosion Vessel
Charged with 143 barrels G. Powder
Light House Tower
MOLE
Severn
Leander
Glasgow
Queen Charlotte
Granicus
Superb
Impregnable
Albion
Dutch Frigates
Hebrus
Heron under weigh
Superb
Minden
Britomart under weigh
Albion
Impregnable
Infernal Bomb
Mutine
Dutch Frigates
Prometheus under weigh
Cordelia under weigh
No ship was to be within outside this line
Three bombs
Dutch Frigates
Eendracht. Dutch Corvette under weigh.

Alexandria, were conducted against enemies admittedly inferior in every respect, whether moral or material. The attack upon Sweaborg again was made, not by regular men-of-war, but by special gun and mortar boats, the latter differing in no essential point from those which the British had all along so freely used against the Channel ports of France.

The sea front of Algiers, extending nearly north and south, possessed a nominally terrific offensive power. A line of connected works three quarters of a mile long, closed the sea face of the town, and for half a mile or so on each side of this, a series of detached batteries fringed the shore, backed by heavier works inland. From a point near the north end of the sea face of the town, a mole in the form of a T extended 400 yards from the shore, and spread to right and left in arms parallel to the beach, and extending 600 yards. The southern arm formed the harbour, within which the Algerian fleet of a dozen frigates, corvettes, and brigs was closely packed.

The sea-face of the mole carried works—in three cases of three tiers—which mounted some 200 guns, a few of exceptionally large calibre, besides mortars; while the shore line of batteries showed over 250 guns along their fronts. But the whole system of fortification had this weakness, that there was deep water close up to the mole, and that ships brought against it at close quarters had little or nothing to contend against except the fire from the mole itself.*

But still the force set apart for the bombardment was small enough to show that the British Government, and presumably Lord Exmouth and his officers, did not believe that the actual strength of Algiers nearly approached its nominal appearance. It consisted of six sail of the line, two 40-gun, and two 36-gun frigates, five 18 and 10-gun corvettes and sloops, and four bomb-vessels; the ships showing a broadside of 344 guns, besides the mortars.

This force left Plymouth on the 28th of July, and was ready to leave Gibraltar on the 12th of August, joined by five Dutch frigates and a corvette, showing a broadside of 84 guns. The works had all been closely reconnoitred, and every captain in the fleet had been furnished with a plan of them and his appointed anchorage. On the morning of the 27th of August the whole fleet was in sight of the place, and certain terms of submission were submitted to

* *The Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth*, by Edward Osler (Appendix). James says there might have been 1,000 guns in all.

the Dey. This potentate, not seeing fit to respond to the message, the flag-ship of Lord Exmouth, the *Queen Charlotte*, led in, and anchored with springs on her cable, 50 yards only from the southern head of the mole. The other ships ranged themselves as nearly as possible in their assigned positions north and south of her, and in very close order, so that the strength of the fire was upon the mole itself. The Dutch formed the extreme south of the line, and the bomb-vessels lay 2,000 yards outside.

The conduct of the Algerines as the ships approached was a proof to Lord Exmouth that the difference between their moral and material force was quite as great as it had been estimated. Not a gun was fired from the land until the *Queen Charlotte* was seen to be quietly lashing herself to the main-mast of an Algerine brig fast to the shore. At the time, the mole was crowded in front of the works by a gazing crowd of two or three hundred people, to whom Lord Exmouth personally signalled to move out of the way of the broadsides immediately to follow. Not till then were three guns fired at the ships, replied to first by the whole power of the 100-gun three-decker, and then of every other ship as fast as the guns would bear.

It was towards three o'clock in the afternoon that the action began, and in smoke and confusion was continued until 10 P.M. The *Queen Charlotte* then cut her cables and put to sea, followed by the remaining ships; and by two o'clock on the morning of the 28th every ship was out, and the bombardment of Algiers was over.

Besides the regular men-of-war and bomb-vessels engaged, a numerous flotilla of ships' and other boats firing rockets and guns were employed between the ships, and at a little after 9 P.M. an explosion vessel, charged with 143 barrels of gunpowder, was run ashore and blown up on the north end of the mole.

The fire of the *Queen Charlotte* brought down the whole of the batteries on the south end of the mole in three broadsides, exposing the vessels in the harbour to destruction, and leaving the works behind the mole open to the storm of shot. The shipping was burnt; the upper tiers of guns on the mole and many of the town works were silenced, and the town was on fire in several places; but it does not appear that the ships—even if they had not exhausted all their ammunition, which they had—could have remained in position. The amount of ammunition fired away by the ships was tremendous, amounting for the 6 line-of-battle ships and 4 frigates to over 39,000 rounds, while the Dutch are reported to have fired over 10,000 rounds, the total weight of

round shot being estimated at 500 tons.* The loss of life and limb in the ships was heavy, amounting between Dutch and English to 141 killed and 742 wounded. One of the ships, the *Impregnable*, is stated to have received 233 shots in her hull, and she lost 210 in killed and wounded.†

The operations against the coast of Syria in 1840, which involved bombardments by ships, of Beyrout, Djebail, and Sidon, and culminated in that of Acre, took place under somewhat exceptional circumstances. But the rule of war was not neglected which required the masking of any naval force which could by possibility interfere by sea. Such naval force as Mehemet Ali possessed, was closely watched by a British force off Alexandria during the whole time that hostilities lasted. Again, though bombardment was freely used, the country was not an enemy's country, for the towns bombarded and captured were friendly Turkish possessions, temporarily in the hands of hostile Egyptian garrisons. The object was to drive these garrisons out of Syria, and Turkish troops already possessing more or less hold on the land, co-operated with troops landed from the sea, in the general scheme of operations. What lessons may be drawn from these coast attacks must therefore be modified by these special considerations as well as by our knowledge that there was considerable difference in all cases between the nominal and the actual strength of the places attacked.

Beyrout was partially bombarded by the ships, while a large Turkish and British land force lay in the vicinity. It was not a place capable of much resistance, and it was hoped that the Egyptian garrison would withdraw to save effusion of blood. The Governor declining, the forts were again bombarded on September 11th, but still without result. But it was afterwards evacuated in consequence of the movements of the Turkish troops in its rear. Djebail was a small fortress, and was bombarded to cover the attack by a storming party landed from the *Carysfort*, *Dido*, and *Cyclops* steamer. The immediate attack failed, but the place was evacuated the same night.

The capture of Sidon was effected on the 27th September by the fire of an 84-gun ship, the *Thunderer*, an Austrian frigate, a

* Nine hundred and sixty-six 13 and 10 inch shells were thrown in by the bomb-vessels.

† See *Narrative of the Expedition to Algiers in the Year* 1816, by A. Salamé; James, vol. vi., p. 569; *Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth*, by Edward Osler, p. 294.

Turkish corvette, and a sloop, together with four steamers, the *Cyclops*, *Gorgon*, *Stromboli*, and *Hydra*, covering the landing of a sufficient body of troops. The business was quickly done, and the garrison of 3,000 men submitted to the force of 1,000 men landed against them, the loss of the attacking party being but 35 in killed and wounded.

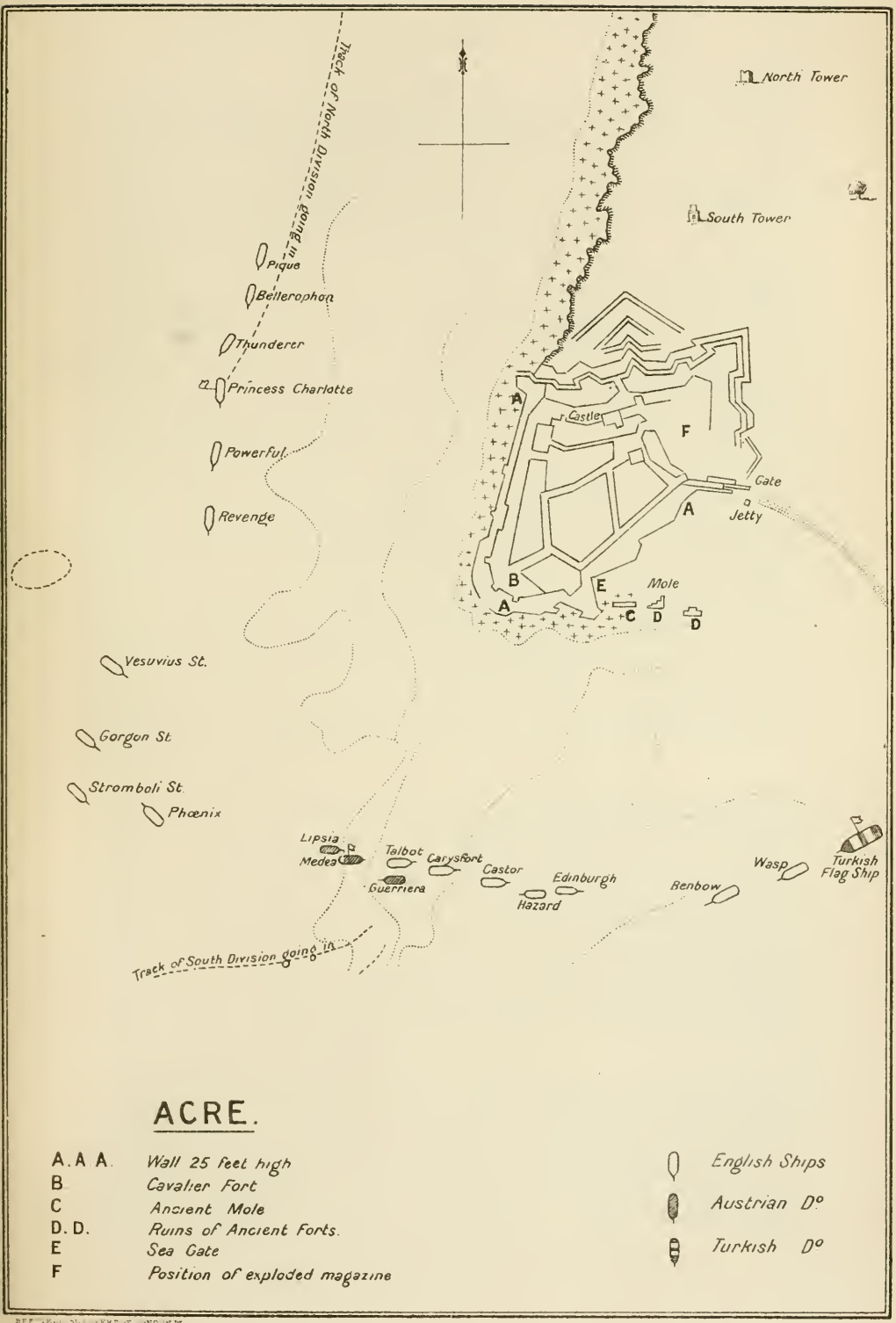
The capture of Acre was on the principle of the capture of Sidon, or, farther back, of the capture of Porto Bello. The belief, which turned out to be well founded, was, that if the ships could be brought sufficiently close to the walls, the fire might be subdued to a point permitting of the landing the British artillery and engineers, together with a division of Turkish infantry, which was held to be sufficient force to overcome an Egyptian garrison said to number 5,000 men.

The plate, which is copied from that in Yonge's *Naval History*,* sufficiently illustrates the nature of the attack. The ships took up their positions in the early part of the 4th November 1840, and fire was opened on the works about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till near dark. The garrison at first replied with vigour, but with small effect, owing to the badness of the aim. But in a couple of hours one of the principal powder magazines, which was at the back of the town, exploded with most destructive effect, two whole regiments under arms being cut off. The garrison was paralysed by the accident. The fire slackened, and in half an hour ceased altogether. The Egyptians evacuated the place in the night, which was occupied by the British and Turks next morning. None of the ships were materially damaged; and the loss in killed and wounded did not exceed 60 men.†

The attack on Algiers and the operations against the Syrian coast towns exhibit signs of transition in the material of war. Congreve rockets, which we had not before heard of at sea, were used against Algiers; and on the coast of Syria, steam was doing its part. But it is well to note that here, as later, steam and sail were employed indifferently on the same work. We are so far from observing any change in the method because of steam, and because few heavy shell guns, in the case of the *Vesuvius*, *Gorgon*, *Stromboli*, and *Phœnix*, had taken the place of many light guns in the frigates and line-of-battle ships, that the sailing ships have the inshore and the steamships the offshore position. Only the

* The plate of Bomarsund is from the same source.

† *The War in Syria*, by Commodore Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B., vol. i., p. 196 Yonge's *Naval History*, vol. ii., p. 532.


North Tower
South Tower
Track of North Division going in
Pique
Bellerophon
Thunderer
Princess Charlotte
Powerful
Revenge
Castle
Gate
Jetty
Mole
Vesuvius St.
Gorgon St.
Stromboli St.
Phœnix
Lipsia
Medea
Talbot
Carysfort
Castor
Edinburgh
Hazard
Guerriera
Benbow
Wasp
Turkish Flag Ship
Track of South Division going in
ACRE.
A.A.A. Wall 25 feet high
B Cavalier Fort
C Ancient Mole
D.D. Ruins of Ancient Forts.
E Sea Gate
F Position of exploded magazine
English Ships
Austrian Dº
Turkish Dº

advantage of more perfect locomotion is taken advantage of when Sir Robert Stopford, the British Commander-in-Chief, transfers his flag from the *Princess Charlotte* three-decker to a steamer.

Hence our chief observation must be that there is not, up to 1840, any sign of a change either in the principles of strategy or of tactics in the attack from the sea upon territory.

We therefore pass to the next prominent attack upon territory from the sea, the bombardment of the forts of Odessa on the 22nd of April 1854. The object of the demonstration, for it was not really more, was punitive, and yet care was taken that it should not be so. Odessa had, a few days earlier, fired on a flag of truce, and 4 British with 3 French steamers were detailed to inflict a certain amount of chastisement, not on the town or its ships, but on the forts defending the town, Government ships, and Government stores. The ships attacking naturally kept under way, as the force was not nearly sufficient to settle down to the work as at Algiers, and while this limited the damage to the ships—although the *Vauban*, one of the French steamers was compelled to withdraw—it limited the damage done on shore. Gun-boats with rockets afterwards assisted in the bombardment, but as if to emphasize how little in real fact steam had altered the processes of naval war, the sailing frigate *Arethusa*, under the command of Captain W. R. Mends,* took part in the operation side by side with the steamers.

> At last, a little before noon, signs that our cannonade had not been without its effect began to be seen in the flames which burst out from the fort at the end of the mole, and from different parts of the works and storehouses which had been most exposed. At one o'clock the fort blew up with a terrible explosion; the rest of the batteries, most of which were now in flames, discontinued their fire; and Captain Jones brought his squadron closer in to attack the shipping behind the mole. Its destruction was easy and rapid. Many of the vessels were sunk by our guns; others took fire, and the conflagration lasted throughout the night and the greater part of the next day. The trading vessels under the quarantine mole, and the unarmed part of the town were spared; but the batteries, the Imperial docks and port, the barracks, and the abundant supplies of ammunition and military stores of all kinds accumulated in the Goverment storehouses were utterly destroyed.†

This was in reality the same sort of thing which towns on the north coast of France had been subjected to over and over again in earlier times. The only real difference was that the shells were fired from guns instead of mortars, and not against private property.

But the bombardment of Sweaborg on the 9th and 10th of August 1855 was in reality a return, on a much more imposing

* The present Admiral Sir William Mends, G.C.B.

† Yonge, vol. ii., p. 562.

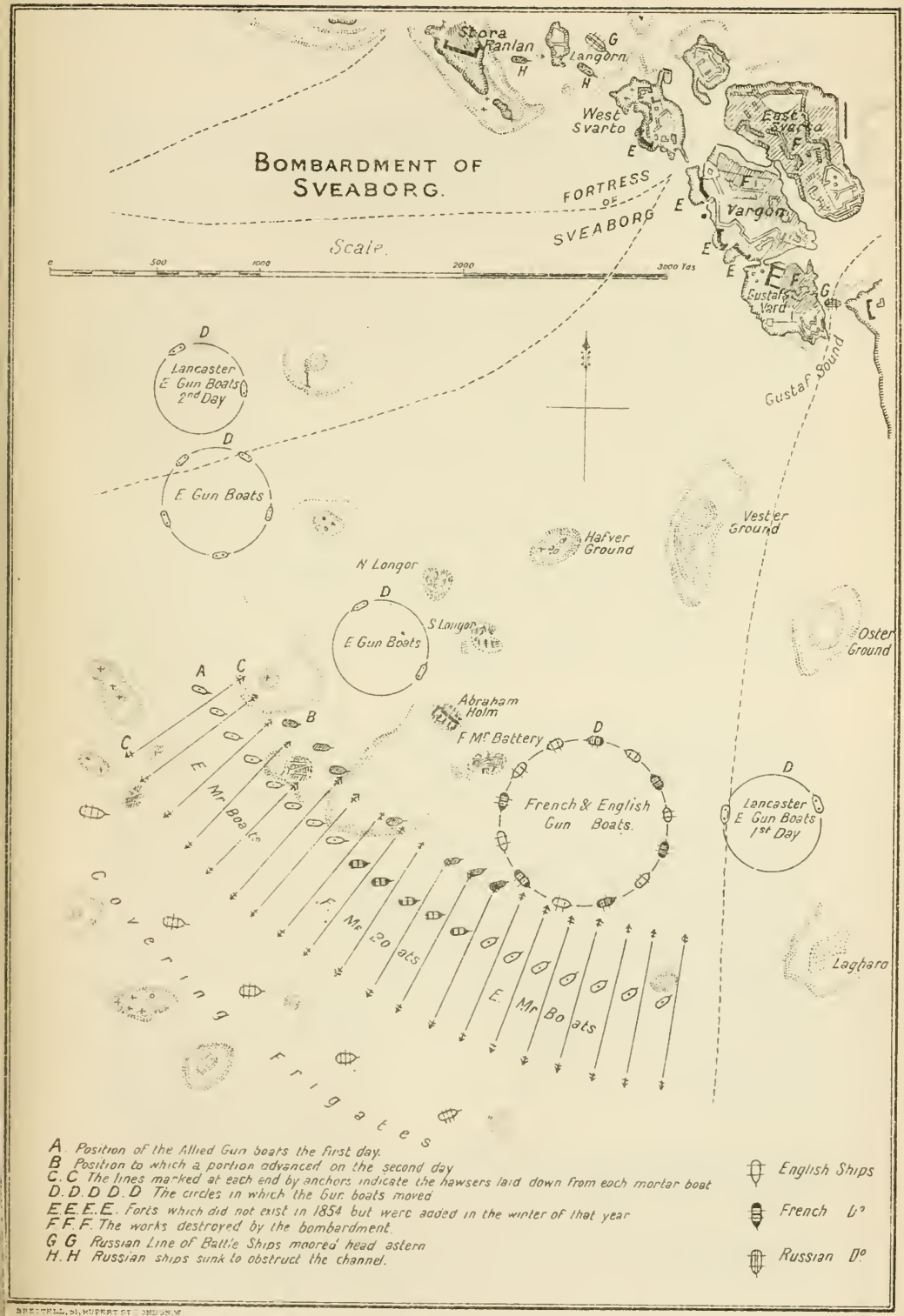
scale, to the ordinary operations against the French coast towns. Numbers of mortars mounted in specially built sailing mortar-vessels were the engines chiefly relied upon. Gun-boats carrying one or two heavy shell-guns formed the next implements of attack, and only one or two line-of-battle ships, at each extreme of the attack, created a diversion by firing for a short period, at somewhat long range, on some earthworks and gun-boats which formed the flanks of the defence. I have extracted the plan of the operations from Yonge's *History of the Navy*, but as the object is not to go into detail of attack, I need only observe that with the exception of the French mortar battery erected on an island, everything was kept in motion, and the casualties from the enemy's fire were very few. There was, however, a great failure amongst the mortars, many of them splitting up, rather than bursting, after a short time. The command of the sea, it may be remarked, was entirely secured by the immense fleet which was not occupied in the bombardment, and was ready to act against any possibly interfering force.

The result of the bombardment was one great explosion, with lesser ones, and many fires, which continued long burning. The Russian reports were that the damage was slight. The telegraphic account to the Russian Government at 10.17 P.M. on the 10th, was—

> The bombardment to-day has positively done no damage, either to the fortifications or to the batteries or guns. In these two days the conflagration destroyed some buildings in the island of Stura-Ester-Swartoe.*

No lives were lost on the side of the Allies. The Russian loss was not published. They estimated that the allied fire reached thirty shells per minute, and that 10,000 shells were fired between 7 A.M. and 8 P.M. on the 9th of August. I have not seen what the actual expenditure of the Allies was, but I think the general impression has been that the allied expenditure on the attack was not more than balanced by the results obtained. Yet I suppose it must be considered as the greatest bombardment which was ever undertaken from the sea. Certainly, nothing resulted from it to alter the general judgment which had long been passed on operations of the class. Perhaps the most novel feature in the bombardment was the great distance at which it was carried on. Reference to the plan shows that no gun or mortar vessel was nearer than 2,000 yards to the batteries, and that most of the mortar-boats were over 3,000. The method of altering the position of the mortar-boats

* *Annual Register* for 1855, p. 131; Yonge, vol. ii., *passim*.


BOMBARDMENT OF SVEABORG.
Stora Ranlan
Langorn
West Svarto
East Svarto
Vargon
FORTRESS OF SVEABORG
Scale.
0 500 1000 2000 3000 Yds
Gustafs Yard
Gustaf Sound
Lancaster E Gun Boats 2nd Day
E Gun Boats
Hafver Ground
Vester Ground
N Langor
S Langor
E Gun Boats
Oster Ground
Abraham Holm
F Mr Battery
French & English Gun Boats.
Lancaster E Gun Boats 1st Day
E Mr Boats
F Mr Boats
E Mr Boats
Covering Frigates
Lagbara
A Position of the Allied Gun boats the first day.
B Position to which a portion advanced on the second day
C.C The lines marked at each end by anchors indicate the hawsers laid down from each mortar boat
D.D.D.D.D The circles in which the Gun boats moved
E.E.E.E. Forts which did not exist in 1854 but were added in the winter of that year
F.F.F. The works destroyed by the bombardment.
G.G Russian Line of Battle Ships moored head astern
H.H Russian ships sunk to obstruct the channel.
English Ships
French Do
Russian Do

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from time to time, by hawsers laid out ahead and astern, was possibly not new; and the circling of the gun-boats was but what might have been done in a somewhat varied manner by vessels under sail. All this leaves the chief change in material as the substitution of few and heavy shell guns for many smaller shot guns.

It is not necessary to do more than notice the fact that our ships in the Black Sea—chiefly sailing line-of-battle ships—engaged the powerful Russian forts at Sevastopol on the 17th October 1854, as an assistance and diversion to a bombardment from the land side at the same time. It was a fine exhibition of gallantry, but the Russian works were not those of Algerines or Egyptians; nor could they be approached nearer than 750 yards on the side chosen by the English flag-ship, so that the results were no more encouraging than heretofore for that particular method of attack.

A certain amount of bombarding was done by the Chilians on Peruvian coast towns in 1879–81. The naval forces were small on both sides, but it does seem worthy of note that Peru, as the inferior naval power, did not attempt to make territorial attacks from the sea, though she engaged ships covered by shore batteries.*

Nor can the Chilian bombardments by gun and rocket, as at Mollendo and Pisagua, be regarded as regular set attacks upon territory, but rather as casual reprisals upon practically undefended places, where troops had in the first instance fired on Chilian boats sent to destroy wharves and cargo barges, &c. These were minor affairs in ordinary course, which had constantly happened in the days of sail. Yet it ought to be observed that this first method of carrying on the war adopted by the Chilians, which came to something like ignoring the Peruvian navy, was wholly condemned by the Chilian people, and many of those concerned in it lost their commands and reputations. Afterwards, when at Arica, it became a question, on the 4th October 1879, whether the Chilian squadron should bombard the place or go in quest of the *Huascar*, the latter decision was taken, and the result of it was the capture of that ship on the 8th.

This gave the Chilians the command of the sea, and they very soon began to make use of it by pushing territorial attacks. The capture of Pisagua on November 2nd was almost in regular form.

* *The War on the Pacific Coast of South America, 1879–81*, by Lieutenant T. B. M. Mason, U.S.A. Office of Naval Intelligence; *The War between Peru and Chili*, by Clements R. Markham, C.B., F.R.S.

The main body of the troops was landed some distance down the coast to advance on the place by land, while smaller bodies, covered by the ships, were to land at closer quarters, but chiefly by way of feint and diversion. But the Chilians were able to convert the feint into the real attack, and the main body found the work done on its arrival.

Arica was shelled for a time by way of diversion on February 27th, 1880, but the ships drew off, finding that the odds were against them. But the general course of the Chilians was the carriage of troops along the coast, and the landing of them at convenient places for purely military operations.

What was in some respects a novel feature in naval warfare took place here two days afterwards, and was continued for six days. The Chilians had bought an Irish cattle-ship, the *Belle of Cork*, and at Valparaiso they had fitted her with an 8-inch 11½-ton breech-loading Armstrong gun on a revolving carriage. It had a great range, much greater than any of the guns mounted on shore. Immediately on her arrival off Arica, this vessel, which had been re-named the *Angamos*, opened fire on Arica at from 6,000 to 8,000 yards range. She fired 100 shell into the place deliberately, but it does not appear that any great damage was done.*

This operation, which was several times repeated by the same ship at different places, until December 9th, 1880, when the gun, on discharge, suddenly slipped out of its trunnion ring and disappeared overboard, was really less novel than it seemed. We have several times observed that when territorial attacks were designed, the ships were accompanied by bomb-vessels, sometimes two or three, sometimes only one. We have just read how at Algiers the bomb-vessels operated at what was then an extreme range, 2,000 yards. It was of the essence of the bomb-vessel's functions that she should throw shell at ranges which were, by comparison long. We have seen the gun and the mortar united at Sweaborg on precisely the same service, and now we see the *Angamos* alone performing just the functions which a bomb-vessel would have performed had the mortar been adopted instead of the gun. I suppose it is not impossible that the howitzer may, for this kind of service, take the place of the gun, in which case the change would be even slighter than the *Angamos* made it.†

* Lieutenant Madan. "Incidents of the War between Chili and Peru."—*Journal R. U.S.I.*, vol. xxv., p. 700. Lieutenant Mason does not mention the occurrence. *See also* Markham.

† Remark is offered by Lieutenant Madan as to the advantage the *Angamos* had by the superiority of the of range her gun. This was obviously an accident, and

The change seems to be summed up in the extension of the range at which bombardment is conducted. When the French bombarded Sfax on July 5th, 1881, the *Chacal* opened fire at 5,000 metres on the Water Battery, and breached it after an hour's work. The land batteries replied with only 18 discharges. At first their shot fell short, but when they got the range, they reached the ship. On July the 6th, the *Reine-Blanche* and the *Alma* fired slowly and at long range, throughout the day, upon the town. The *Pique* and *Chacal* opened fire in the afternoon upon the batteries at 2,400 metres. These only replied with 13 discharges. On the 7th the same sort of fire was resumed, with the same feeble reply, but on the 8th the bombardment was pressed more closely home by the employment of the armed launches of the ships up to ranges of 1,000 metres. On the 9th fire was again opened, but only two shots were returned.

The fleet with the troops for landing arrived on the 14th of July, and, after further bombardment on the 15th and 16th, at ranges of from 2,200 to 6,500 metres, six battalions and a naval brigade landed, and after slight opposition and loss captured the town.*

Here, again, we seem to be met by the reflection that the differences between an operation of this kind in 1781 and 1881 are matters of degree. If the range at which ships attack works for the purpose of silencing them to prepare for landing the troops is increased, the time necessary is correspondingly attenuated. The long range at Sfax was forced on the French ships by reason of the shallowness of the water. Perhaps the ships would have taken no part in the capture of Sfax a century earlier; but the troops, and the command of the sea—the two requisites—would have been just as clearly demanded in the one case as in the other.

The bombardment of Alexandria on the 11th July, 1882, had for its object "the destruction of the earthworks and dismantling of the batteries on the sea front of Alexandria."† Hence it was of a destructive and punitive character, such as the various bombardments of French Channel ports, and those of Algiers, Odessa, and Sweaborg. The position of the batteries,

was always present when, in days gone by, a bomb-vessel opened on a fort with her mortars.

* "Operations of the French Navy during the recent War with Tunis, 1880–81." Translated from *L'Armée Maritime*, by Lieut. M. Fisher Wright, U.S. Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence, Washington.

† Sir F. Beauchamp Seymour's Memorandum, July 10, 1882, given in *Report of the British Naval and Military Operations in Egypt*, 1882, by Lieut.-Com. C. F. Goodrich, U.S.N. Office of Naval Intelligence, Washington.

and the lie of the rocks and shoals which skirted the shore, governed the positions appointed for the ships. Such close quarters as the *Princess Charlotte* took up at Algiers were not feasible for the British ironclads. The shortest range from the batteries named for any of them was 1,000 yards, and that was extended to 3,700 yards in other cases.

To go at all minutely into the results of this bombardment would be foreign to my purpose. The leading features are familiar to most readers. The fire was opened at 7 A.M., and continued until 5.30 P.M., when the ships anchored for the night. The ships —9 battle ships, and 6 smaller vessels—threw 3,198 projectiles against the place, a general average for the battle-ships' heavy guns of 20·6 rounds per gun, or a rate per gun of one round in 31½ minutes. * The loss and damage to the ships was not great. There were 6 killed, and 27 wounded on board. But the detail of the damage done to the forts makes up a long list, and seems formidable; I must sum it all up in the conclusion of the competent onlooker who is my authority. He says, as the result of his observations: "Vessels are not yet, and never will be, able to fight on even terms with forts." This broad issue, so put, is equivalent to saying that all the modern improvements in ships have been met by equivalent improvements in forts, and unless the capacity for engaging at longer ranges be a change, there is none. Other broad issues arising out of the bombardment of the forts at Alexandria are, that the surrender of a place cannot be achieved without troops to occupy any more now than formerly; and that the command of the sea remains a necessity before such an operation can be contemplated. A narrower issue advanced a stage at Alexandria was the superiority of fire from an anchored ship, and the preference for slow and deliberate fire when the range was considerable. Nothing was settled as to whether close quarters had lost its old effect in subduing the fire of an ordinary battery.

Having thus traced out the more modern instances of attack by bombardment from the sea with or without the immediate aid of troops, I return to compare the older and more modern general attacks upon territory, and I take up this thread at Charleston in South Carolina, because, as I have observed, it was twice attacked in two different ways, and with different results, in the last century, and twice with analagous results in this century.

In the spring of 1776 it was determined to make an attack on Charleston, then in the hands of the revolted Colonists, and early

* Only 1,731 projectiles of and above 7 in. were fired.

CITY ENTRENCHMENTS
Barrel Torpedoes
Hobcaw Pt Battery
CHARLESTON
SOUTH CAROLINA R.R.
JOHN Creek
DRUM ISLAND
HALF MOON BATTERY
COOPER RIVER
ASHLEY RIVER
HOG ISLAND
MOUNT PLEASANT
Battery
Battery
Battery

in May, Commodore Sir Peter Parker, with two 50-gun ships, four 28-gun frigates, and five smaller vessels, including two bomb-vessels, arrived at Cape Fear, where he was joined by General Clinton and a body of troops. The armament sailed from Cape Fear on June 1st, and anchored off Charleston on June 4th. Two days were now employed in sounding and laying down buoys to mark the channel. The main ship channel into Charleston harbour runs from south to north, along the coast of Morris Island; and the entrance to it is over a bar six miles south of Sullivan's Island, with only seventeen or eighteen feet of water over it. On the 7th, all the frigates and some of the transports were anchored inside it, probably five miles from Sullivan's Island. The troops were landed on Long Island, which lies to the north-east of Sullivan's Island, and is divided from it by a narrow channel. The 50-gun ships were got over the bar later, and by the 15th preparations were completed for the attack.

The intention was to make a joint attack in the usual way, and certain works on Sullivan's Island, the forerunners of the ultimate Fort Moultrie, were made the first object of attack, as guarding the approach to the town. It was represented that the channel between Long Island and Sullivan's Island was easily fordable, and it was proposed to place the ships to attack the sea faces of the forts, while the troops assailed them in rear. There were difficulties in moving some of the ships up into their intended positions, but during the forenoon of the 28th June, fire was opened on the works by the bomb-vessels, and by all the ships that could bring their guns to bear. But then the troops found that the water they expected to cross was seven feet deep, and all idea of their taking part had to be given up. The ships carried on the attack for nearly ten hours, but made no sensible impression on the forts, and suffered themselves heavily. It became necessary to withdraw them, and the only result was that the ships were terribly shattered, the *Bristol* and *Experiment* (50's) lost 111 and 79 men respectively, and the rest of the ships in proportion. The attack was abandoned as a complete failure, and the troops were embarked and taken back to New York.* The points which chiefly concern us are the clear intention of making the troops conduct the main attack, and the collapse which followed the failure of the military action.

But Charleston was an important centre; and another attempt upon it, this time successful, was made in 1780. No doubt the

* Schomberg, vol. i., p. 428; Beatson, vol. iv., p. 149.

place was now considered very much stronger than it had been four years earlier, but the size of the force assembled under Vice-Admiral Arbuthnot and General Sir Henry Clinton, was altogether out of comparison with the former one; 7,550 men were now embarked at New York, and the naval force was 6 sail of the line, 7 frigates, and a sloop, all of which sailed from New York on December 16th, 1779, having been detained there for some time by the threat of d'Estaing's fleet, until it was ascertained that on the 1st November part of it had gone to the West Indies, and the rest, with d'Estaing himself, home to France.* The expedition first anchored off Savannah, where Clinton gathered information as to the situation of Charleston, and also ordered a co-operating force to march overland to Charleston to his assistance.

It seems at once to have been arranged that the fleet should play a very subordinate part in the affair. Clinton landed his army on the 11th and 12th of February at Stono Inlet and John's Island, separated from Charleston by two rivers, the Stono, with the Wappoo Creek, and the Ashley River running between James Island and Charleston itself. Between the 24th and 26th of February the army, except troops left on John's Island and Stono, to cover the communications, was passed over the Stono River to James Island, and advanced towards Charleston. A bridge was erected over Wappoo Creek, and defensive works were set up, while the material for the siege, including guns from the ships, was collected. The next step was to send all the line-of-battle ships back to New York, while Arbuthnot shifted his flag into the *Roebuck*, a 44-gun frigate.

There was a small Franco-American naval force in Charleston Harbour, consisting of 1 44-gun and 1 32-gun frigates, besides 6 other smaller ones and 2 sloops. This force was for a long time able to seriously delay the passage of the British ships over the bar; but when Arbuthnot persevered, and his ships were actually in the Channel, but still four or five miles from the entrance of the harbour, the American Commodore, Whipple, first fell back to support Fort Moultrie, and then further back to the town. He afterwards abandoned all defence by ships. The guns were landed and placed in battery on shore. Ships were sunk between Shute's Folly and the town, and booms and obstructions were prepared.

* Schomberg and Beatson differ as to their dates, the former saying that Arbuthnot did not leave New York till February 11th, 1780, whereas Beatson makes the expedition sight Carolina on February 1st. But the necessity which was felt of waiting for the disappearance of opposing force is worthy of note, and probably Beatson's dates are correct.

But still this naval work, both of attack and defence, was mere diversion. The town had been covered by a line of works on the north side, and this was the real point of attack by Clinton. On the 29th March, the army, assisted by the boats of the fleet, which I think must have come up the Stono River and Wappoo Creek, crossed over and proceeded to make a formal attack on the works. It must be noted that the Cooper River and the land on the east side of the town was open, and that Charleston could therefore draw in supplies and reinforcements. On the 9th of April Clinton was ready to open his batteries, and on that day the British squadron weighed and ran the gauntlet of the forts on Sullivan's Island, anchoring on the north coast of James Island, and as it was hoped, out of the fire from the guns of Charleston. In truth, the ships were well within range, but the fact that several shot passed through the *Roebuck* was concealed, and the enemy was deceived into so complete a belief of their shot falling short, that they left the British ships unmolested in a position where the Americans might perhaps have been easily destroyed. Instead, they contented themselves with sinking more vessels in Cooper River, and by means of batteries and galleys forbidding approach in that direction.

Clinton had been reinforced by the troops marching from Savannah, and he was subsequently reinforced from New York, while operations in the field in the rear of the siege works, and upon the Cooper River, tended to cut off the Charleston garrison more and more from outside help. The Admiral on his side made unsuccessful attempts to push small craft up the Cooper River, but the work of the ships was not done by them, but by their men in landing parties. These first took a post and battery at Mount Pleasant, and afterwards Fort Moultrie and the batteries on Sullivan's Island capitulated.

Meantime the work of the siege went on in the regular way. The third parallel was completed on the 6th of May, on the 8th the General—Lincoln—in command of Charleston was again summoned, and on the 11th he capitulated.

If we pass now to the American Civil War, we shall see that though the details of the two pairs of attacks were different, the principles were alike, and the same results from their application followed. We have seen that in both the attacks described, the command of the sea was necessary, but that when it was used in the successful attack, it was more to secure a base for the army by means of the navy, than to employ the latter in direct opera-

tions. The Federals in 1863 were fully assured of the command of the sea; but in the new and remarkable constructions called monitors, with their immense shell guns and their supposed invulnerability, they had implements which, perhaps, they were fairly justified in believing would upset and destroy the well-established rules of naval war. However this may be, we find the belief everywhere prevalent that monitors were more than a match for fortifications, and a preliminary trial of the *Montauk* in January and February 1863 against Fort McAlister on the Ogeechee River, which resulted in the expenditure of two stocks of ammunition without material result, only whetted the desire for further proof that old rules still held. On the 3rd of March, three of the new vessels fired on Fort McAlister for eight hours without doing more damage than could be repaired in a night, while some of the vessels were under repair after the bombardment was over, till the end of the month.

The Federals at this time had all the advantages of ports to serve as bases, which the British had had in the American War of Independence. They had seized Port Royal, between the Confederate ports of Savannah and Charleston, and had made it their main base, but they also used North Edisto Inlet, an excellent harbour within twenty miles of Charleston bar, and there, at the end of March 1863, the "ironclads," as the monitors were called, began to assemble, and from thence they sailed for Charleston bar on the 5th of April. There were 8 monitors, and the broadside ironclad *New Ironsides*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Dupont. The early proceedings were precisely as they had been so many years before; there was the detention at the bar while it was sounded and buoyed, and then the gradual passage over at high water, with the final anchorage inside.

It is not necessary for my purpose to go into much detail over the attack. We hear the very old story of the whole expedition being in the hands of the pilots, and of their being unwilling to move till noon on the 7th of April. Then the ships weighed and proceeded along the shore of Morris Island led by the *Weehawken*, which had a most hampering and inconvenient torpedo-catching structure attached to her bows. It was intended that the ships should be in line ahead, and about 100 yards apart, but precise order was found to be difficult to maintain. By the time the head of the line had reached Fort Wagner, Forts Moultrie and Sumter, and all the batteries within range opened fire, and the orders had been not to return it until within easy range of Sumter. But a

line of obstructions was observed between Sumter and Moultrie, which barred the further progress in that direction, just as, by an earlier system, Arbuthnot's progress had been barred up Cooper River eighty-three years before.

Various difficulties occurred in getting the ships into accurate positions against Sumter. Some ships got within 500 yards of the fort, others no nearer than 1,000. The fire of the monitors was found to be exasperatingly slow. It was difficult for the commanders, between their narrow outlook from the pilot-houses and the smoke, to see what they were doing. The ships were hampered by the tides and shoal water, and by the space, which was artificially narrowed by the supposed obstructions. The machinery of the guns failed in unexpected quarters. Bolt-heads and nuts flew about the interior of the turrets and pilot-houses in showers. The mere concussion in the interior, due to blows of the enemy's shot on the outside of the turrets, seem to have temporarily disabled the inmates.

The modern minuteness of publication gives us data which we look for in vain amongst some of the older chronicles, and in a comparison of the guns in action and of the fire on each side, and its results, we can glean a fairly clear knowledge of how this operation stands when statistically viewed.

There were 9 ships engaged against 6 forts and batteries. The ships carried 32 guns in all, of which 7 were 15-inch, 22 11-inch smooth-bores, and 3 150-pounders rifled.

Fort Johnstone mounted only a 10-inch mortar; Fort Gunter mounted 44 guns, but the largest were 4 10-inch, and 8 8-inch Columbiads, with 2 9-inch Dahlgrens, all smooth-bores, and 2 Brooke's rifled 7-inch guns. There were 7 42-pounder rifled guns, the remainder being 32-pounders. Fort Moultrie bore nothing larger than 8-inch smooth-bore Columbiads, of which there were 9, the remainder being 32-pounders, rifled and smooth bores, with 2 mortars. Battery Bee, in continuation of Fort Moultrie, carried 5 10-inch and 1 8-inch Columbiads. Wagner had only 1 32-pounder rifled gun in action, while Fort Beauregard on Sullivan's Island and that on Cuming's Point mounted 4 guns between them.

There were thus amongst the ships 32 guns, the smallest of which were as powerful as the largest of the guns in battery; while of the 67 guns opposed to them, only 2 were up to the power of the 3 smallest guns carried afloat. Thirty-three of the Confederate guns did not exceed 42-pounders, and there were 10 10-inch mortars.

If the number of the guns was adverse to the ships, the presumptive power was the other way. The actual power turned out to be very much in favour of the forts, as while they fired 2,229 shot and shell, the ships only fired 139 shot and shell in all.

All but 24 shot fired from the ships were directed upon Fort Sumter, which was struck 55 times, Moultrie 12 times, and Wagner twice. At least 346 shot or shell struck seven of the ships. The *Keokuk* received no less than 90 projectiles, the *Weehawken* 53, the *Nantucket* 51, and the rest smaller numbers. The number of projectiles that struck the *New Ironsides* is not given, but the Confederates asserted that she was struck 65 times. If this were so, we should have 19 per cent. of the projectiles fired from the forts taking effect, while 50 per cent. of those fired from the ships struck.*

The Admiral ordered the ships out again at 5 P.M., being then under the intention of renewing the attack next morning. The *Keokuk* had withdrawn beforehand, but otherwise it was not supposed that the ships had been beaten till they reassembled at their former anchorage inside the bar. Then, as reported by the Admiral—

> No ships had been exposed over forty minutes, and yet in this brief period, as the Department will perceive by the detailed reports of the commanding officers, five of the ironclads were wholly or partially disabled, disabled too (as the obstructions could not be passed) in that which was most essential to our success—I mean in their armament, or power of inflicting injury by their guns. . . . I was convinced that persistence in the attack would only result in the loss of the greater part of the ironclad fleet, and in leaving many of them inside the harbour to fall into the hands of the enemy.

As an earnest of the truth of the estimate, the *Keokuk* sank at her anchors next morning.†

As usual, the weight of the failure, which should have fallen on those who ordered an attack which all experience was against, fell upon the Admiral, who did his best. Dupont was superseded by Admiral Dahlgren, and joint operations were arranged between him and General Gillmore, by way of Morris Island, the latter being already in occupation of Folly Island, with batteries on its north end to cover the advance into Morris Island. Dupont had already laid down the proper functions for the ships:—"Of course, the most that is expected from the action of these vessels is to relieve

* Probably the difference is owing to the small targets the ships offered in comparison with the size of Fort Sumter, or to the inherent superiority of converging over diverging fire.

† *The Navy in the Civil War, the Atlantic Coast*, by Rear-Admiral Ammen, U.S.A., p. 91, *et seq.*; *Journal Royal U. S. Inst.*, vol. xii., p. 243; vol. xxv., p. 316.

the troops as much as possible, and is to be considered of no other consequence."

It can be seen from an inspection of the map that as the troops advanced to the north, their right flank would be covered by the ships, while the enemy's left flank would be exposed, and any works he had, or might have, to check the Federal advance, would be enfiladed by the ironclads. It was, perhaps, hardly possible to devise a more certain method of attack. Sumter would become untenable when Morris Island was held by the Federals, and the batteries on Sullivan's Island being matched by those across the water would be left open to be taken in flank from the sea; while the obstructions, no longer covered by fire from both sides, might be deliberately removed by the Federal navy.

The strength of the method of attack was recognized. On the 10th July Gillmore opened his batteries against those of the enemy on the southern shore of Morris Island. Early the same morning four of the monitors crossed the bar and took the Morris Island batteries in flank. By eight o'clock the Confederates began to abandon their southern works and to make towards Fort Wagner. The monitors followed up, searching the sand hills, which were capable of concealing troops, as they proceeded. The Federal troops, covered by the ships, pushed on. From 9·30 A.M. to 6 P.M. the ships engaged Wagner at 1,200 yards range while Gillmore advanced to make his assault upon it. Then they withdrew out of fire for the night. In the morning Gillmore informed Dahlgren that he had assaulted Wagner and been repulsed. On the 19th of July the ships got within 300 yards of Wagner, and between their guns and those of Gillmore's batteries, the work was silenced; but an assault made at night by the troops was again repulsed.

Active operations were now suspended on Morris Island; while preparations for renewed attack went on until 17th August, but there was diversion by way of Stono River, very much in the form of Clinton's advance in 1783, in the meantime. The point of attack from the land was now changed to Fort Sumter, upon which all Gillmore's batteries opened on the above named day. The ships engaged Wagner and Cuming's Point batteries at short range, and Sumter at long range; but the return fire was inconsiderable. The land batteries had done such service that the Confederate General in command reported "Sumter in ruins, and all guns on N.W. face disabled, beside seven other guns."

The ships attacked Sumter on the 23rd August at 800 yards,

but only received six shots in reply. On the 25th there was a pause, in order to make an exchange of prisoners, but the state of Fort Sumter was such as to make the Admiral believe he could pass it with impunity if the obstructions did not prevent him. On the night of the 2nd September, he took the ships up the harbour to within 600 yards of Sumter, and on the night of the 6th the Confederates evacuated Morris Island. On the night of the 8th the Federals made an attempt to storm Sumter by a boat expedition, but were repulsed, with destruction of boats and great loss of life.

Sumter had long been powerless for offensive purposes, but was still held by the Confederates, and the Federal navy, having established itself within the harbour, restricted its operations to those of blockade. Direct operations in fact ceased with the ruin of Fort Sumter. There was not military force enough to follow the plan of Clinton, and the obstructions, being considered fatal to naval advance, had proved their efficiency by the destruction of the *Patapsco* on January 15th, 1864. The operations of Sherman in rear of the town, combined with the virtual possession of the port which the Federals held, led to the evacuation of Charleston on February 18th, 1864.*

The analogies between the four attacks to which Charleston was subject, are, no doubt, not absolutely complete. The first attack was entirely naval, not by choice, but by the failure of the troops to take their intended part in it. The third attack was wholly naval by choice, and by a special faith in the monitors which it may be said were far from being regular men-of-war, if they were not specially prepared for the sort of service to which they were put. Admiral Dupont, however, seems to have attributed his failure to the misapprehension of the nature of things, and not to any removable causes, and he was careful to lay down a subordinate part for the ships in any future attack. That is to say, that, in spite of the radical changes which had been made in the material, the Federals would have been wise to have taken past experience as their guide.

The analogies between the two successful attacks are also to be found more in the principle than in the details. Had there been military force enough, Gillmore might have proceeded against Charleston just as Clinton did. But, then, owing to the strength of Fort Sumter as well as to the batteries on Sullivan's and

* The capture of the town of Charleston was never in fact contemplated. The real object was the safe inshore anchorage for the purposes of blockade, which was obtained.

Morris Islands, the fleet could not have passed up to within gunshot of Charleston itself, which the transfer of the obstructive barrier so much nearer the entrance of the harbour than it had been in 1780 might alone have prevented. It was necessary that the troops should, in the first instance, operate upon the harbour defences, and, these being subdued, it only wanted sufficient military force to proceed directly on Charleston. What seems clear is that the navy alone did not consider itself capable of pushing on, even though there was no great barrier of fortification to oppose.

The comparisons which may be drawn between the four attacks upon Charleston make them a peculiarly valuable study; but it must not be held that exceptions to rule are any more absent from the American steam wars than they were in previous sailing wars. The works defending the entrance to Port Royal were so situated, and of such a character, that they could be, and were, reduced by 14 war-ships before any men were landed. The main body of the ships passed and repassed Fort Walker at the south side of the entrance, at 500 to 850 yards, and shelled it till it was evacuated; and then the fort on the north side, Fort Beauregard, which had hardly been attacked at all, was abandoned. There were about 100 guns in the ships and about 23 in the south fort. Works at Hatteras, mounting 25 guns, were also successfully bombarded by ships alone; 70 guns on a broadside of the ships being opposed to 25 in the works, at a considerable range. But in these cases the troops were there, or the attacks would not have been made, and they occupied and held the forts which had succumbed to the ships' fire. The type of such actions was already given in Porto Bello, and not impossibly their success depended much on the particular character of the works attacked, and the exposure of the men in them.

There were several remarkable instances of running the gauntlet, both past and between forts, in the American Civil War. These operations were practically new to naval forces, and were mainly the result of geographical conditions. Mobile, New Orleans, Vicksburg must, unless their lessons are hereafter reversed, teach us that forts have of themselves little power to stop a fleet passing them.

The attacks on and capture of Fort Fisher, one of the last great operations in which the Federal navy was concerned, must be noted as a further confirmation of the continuity of the rules of naval warfare through all material changes.

Fort Fisher was the chief guard of the approach to Wilmington by Cape Fear River. It was a powerful work mounting about 75 guns, and it was proposed to attack it by sea and land, with a fleet mounting 500 guns and an army disembarked in its rear.

The army being behind time, the first attack was made by the old expedient of an explosion vessel, which proved the accuracy of the historical record in proving harmless. Then on the 24th December 1864, the tremendous armada bombarded. The fire of the fort was subdued and the ships were little damaged, but when an army of 3,000 men landed next day to co-operate with the ships, its General pronounced the fort intact for defensive purposes.

The third attack was made on the 13th and 14th of January by the ships alone, while 8,000 troops were landing and preparing to attack. The final attack was on the 15th, when the troops, supported by the ships' fire, pressed on and on, till at ten o'clock at night the Federals were in full possession of the work. There were but 2,300 men in the garrison, and considering the enormous force brought against the place, we must probably infer that most of the naval fire was thrown away. The 8,000 troops, properly supported from the sea by a much smaller naval force, would, according to experience, have succeeded equally well.*

We have seen in the foregoing chapters that the lessons to be drawn from what was not done in the way of territorial attack are often as valuable as any that can be drawn from examples of what was done; and perhaps one of the very latest exhibitions of this truth, the proceedings of the French fleet in the Baltic in 1870, is as pregnant with lessons as any that had preceded it. The broad features of the situation were that the French fleet was entirely of the most modern character, all the changes in naval material having there displayed their full force, and therefore operating to produce all the changes in the method of naval warfare which were due to them. Yet it appeared that nothing was due to them. All the methods, influences, and governing causes which made or modified procedure in 1770 are found in full force in 1870, and leave us with the reflection that there is no reason to doubt the teaching of history as to naval warfare, even after it has been in theory revolutionized.

The intention of the French in sending Bouët-Willaumez to the

* *See* Boynton's *History of the Navy during the Rebellion.* Ammen's *The Navy in the Civil War.* The most concise accounts of the principal naval operations in the Civil War are those of Admiral Hamilton (now Sir Vesey) and Captain Long. *R. U. S. Journal*, vol. xxii., p. 612, and vol. xxv., p. 316.

Baltic in command of an ironclad fleet, was, in the first instance, the blockade of the German ports, but it was intended to devote it to the making of territorial attacks, while another squadron watched and masked the only existing German fleet at Wilhelmshaven on the Jade, outside the Baltic Sea. Here we have at once the re-establishment of the old condition that before territorial attacks can be made, a possibly interfering fleet must be masked.

Not only so, but it was as well understood by the French Government in 1870 as ever it had been in former days, that the navy alone was practically powerless to make territorial attacks, and that whether ships were steam "battle-ships" or sailing "line-of-battle ships" they did not in themselves represent the proper force for conducting territorial attacks. So when Bouët-Willaumez was told that he would be given 14 ironclads to start to the Baltic with, he was told that La Roncière le Noury would follow him with another squadron made up of gun-boats, floating batteries, and transports, conducting an army of 30,000 men under General Bourbaki.

Bouët-Willaumez never passed beyond the blockading stage in the Baltic, imitating therein the conduct of the larger proportion of British admirals in command for years in the North Sea, the Channel, and the Mediterranean. There was a furious outcry against him in France by a people profoundly ignorant of the conditions, yet his answer was complete. He had no troops, no small vessels; none of the appliances for territorial attack; and the masking of the very inferior German fleet was not complete. The conditions which had always prevented territorial attacks prevailed, and they were found to have just the same weight as they always had. The French people had assumed wrongfully that steam and rifled shell-guns had changed all things, but it was found that they had changed nothing; that was all.

When Bouët-Willaumez sailed from Cherbourg on the 24th July, he took with him but 6 battle-ships and 1 despatch vessel. With this force he proceeded to do the only thing open to him, namely, to watch the German squadron. But orders soon reached him (on August 2nd) to pass on into the Baltic, which he did.

He reconnoitred the coast, considering the most suitable points of attack when the land forces and small craft, which he still expected, should reach him. He made Kioge Bay his base, and refitted there, receiving a communication from his Government, dated August 7th, which inferred that none of the necessaries for

territorial attack would reach him, and directly informed him that "it was in a strict blockade of German commercial ports that the chief means of action by the squadron would be found."*

Subsequently Bouët-Willaumez reconnoitred Kiel again, and other parts of the coast, and then, having received one despatch from his Government which ordered him back to France, and another which bade him stay in the Baltic, he returned to Kioge Bay, and ordered a committee to assemble and report to him as to what might be in the power of the squadron as it stood, to effect by way of territorial attack.

This Committee was immediately formed. It was composed of Rear-Admiral Dieudonné, President; M. Duburquois, Chief of the Staff; Lacour, Colonel of Artillery; and two Captains, chosen by lot, Captains Quilio and Serres, commanding the *Guyenne* and the *Thétis*. On the 12th August they met on board the *Surveillante*, and the same evening their report was complete.

The following are the terms in which they expressed themselves with regard to the most important places on the Prussian littoral, and the military operations which might be undertaken:—

Alsen.—The depth of water will not permit an approach to this point within at most 3,000 metres, a distance at which an engagement would be useless, because of the plunging fire of the forts. Nothing is here possible without a force to land. Besides, it is most probable that submarine mine defence extends along the shore, which it would be indispensable to remove, and which could not be attempted until the squadron was supplied with the necessary materials.

Duppel and Kappeln.—Completely out of reach from the ships' guns. Too little water in the bays. We could only get at them with armoured gun-boats.

Eckernford.—It is easy to destroy the isolated batteries, but they are of no importance, and without the possibility of throwing troops on shore the reduction of the forts would be insignificant.

Kiel.—It would be necessary to employ the whole force of the squadron. The success of gun-fire uncertain, on account of the height of the forts above the shore, and the losses certain for the assailants, if they were not able to occupy the forts as they were silenced. The forts of Frederiksdort being destroyed, and the squadron being unable to penetrate to the bottom of the bay within gunshot range of Kiel, on account of the obstructions, the torpedoes, and all the means of defence which have there been accumulated, the French ships would soon be forced to retire without even knowing the result of their attack.

Neustadt.—An open town and without defence, but with a bay so shallow that the French ships could not even reach with their projectiles the merchant ships which are anchored some distance from the port, properly so called.

It is the same all along the coast as far as—

Colberg.—A strong place, besieged in 1807, and attackable (from the sea) at 2,200 metres. Before entering upon action there, it will be necessary to make a reconnaissance, in order to make certain that the houses along the shore, the Casino in particular, do not mask fortifications which would compel a modification of the plan of attack.

Danzig.—The fort at the entrance to the bay is within range of our upper-deck guns, but only at a distance of 400 metres. The battery guns could not be used elsewhere with advantage.

* *The Campaign in the North Sea and the Baltic*, by René de Pont Jest. *Journal R.U.S. Institution*, vol xxxiii., p. 229.

Conclusion.—Colberg and Danzig alone can be attacked; but the small effect which will result from these two attempts will be of a nature to deprive the French squadron of the prestige of its force. In order to operate usefully, special vessels are required, and the prospect of forcing the enemy to assemble his troops on this part of the littoral. But this end is unattainable without a landing force.*

We thus see that all that was open to this modern steam fleet, whose real function was holding the command of the sea, and not territorial attack, was just what would have been open to a sailing fleet of line-of-battle ships in the same waters one hundred or two hundred years before. The projectiles which might be fired into Colberg or Danzig were larger, and would generally be shells; their range was greater, and the attack might be conducted at a greater distance from the shore, but otherwise all the *pros* and *cons* were the same as ever, and still as ever was it necessary that the ships attacking should have command of the sea assured. The proof came immediately.

There remained, then, Colberg, and Vice-Admiral Bouët prepared to make some serious demonstration against this town, when he received, on the night of the 13th August, a dispatch which informed him that the Prussian fleet had left the Jade, and had passed up the Coast of Jutland to enter the Baltic. The fact might be true, for it was possible that Prince Adalbert might have learnt the departure of Admiral Fourichon from Cherbourg, and had left the Jade to seek the shelter of Kiel, which he thought might be attacked. In the face of this contingency, the Commander-in-Chief of the squadron did not hesitate an instant; he hastily drew his ships together, and proceeded towards the Great Belt, to oppose the passage of the enemy's vessels, and to offer them battle.

The attack upon Colberg was thus postponed by the threat of an inferior force, just as, so many years before, Newport had been saved by the threat of the inferior force of Howe. It was not, perhaps, that there was a fear of what the inferior force of the enemy might do, or attempt to do, directly. It was just the impossibility that a commander whose operations depended on his supremacy at sea, could allow that supremacy to be even questioned by the appearance of the enemy's fleet at sea and unfought.

The information was subsequently found to be false, and again preparations were made for the attack on Colberg. When within 80 miles of the place, a gale of wind decided a rendezvous at Kioge Bay, and there true news reached Bouët-Willaumez that the French squadron had raised the blockade of the Jade. Colberg was once more saved; the Admiral felt bound to give the place up, and to make his dispositions to defend the Great Belt.

Here, therefore, we see that under the latest conditions, as under the earliest, even so simple an operation as the distant and merely

* René de Pont Jest. *R.U.S. Journal*, vol. xxxiii., p. 230.

punitive or destructive bombardment of a place cannot be undertaken unless possibly interfering naval forces of the enemy are first masked.

As if to conclude my argument, and make it unanswerable, we have the great defeat of the Italian fleet off the Island of Lissa in 1866 by the Austrians, which has been already alluded to. Here all the law that history had been so long elaborating was set at defiance. The Austrian force at Pola—supposed inferior—was unwatched by even a single cruizer. Persano proceeded to bombard the forts of Lissa without a notion of what the Austrian movement might be. He had run counter to historial teaching in making bombardment the first and main attack on the island, instead of first landing the troops and making the ships play the subordinate part in co-operating with them. He had fired away most of his ammunition, and was, on the 20th July, in the middle of landing the troops, when the *Esploratore*, the only ship in the shape of a look-out which he had established, signalled at about eight o'clock in the morning, the enemy in sight. They were so close that in two hours and a half, Tegetthoff had made his celebrated signal to the ironclads to rush upon and sink the enemy, an enemy which, owing to its mistakes, was totally unready to meet him and suffered the defeat it had courted.

I think, therefore, that these chapters leave us under the inference that certain conditions—command of the sea, sufficient and well-handled land forces, landings either away from the batteries, or after their fire has been temporarily silenced, proper appliances and small vessels—have always been necessary to secure the success of territorial attack, and that there is at least nothing in recent times, to show that the rule has in any way changed.

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